Men-at-Arms

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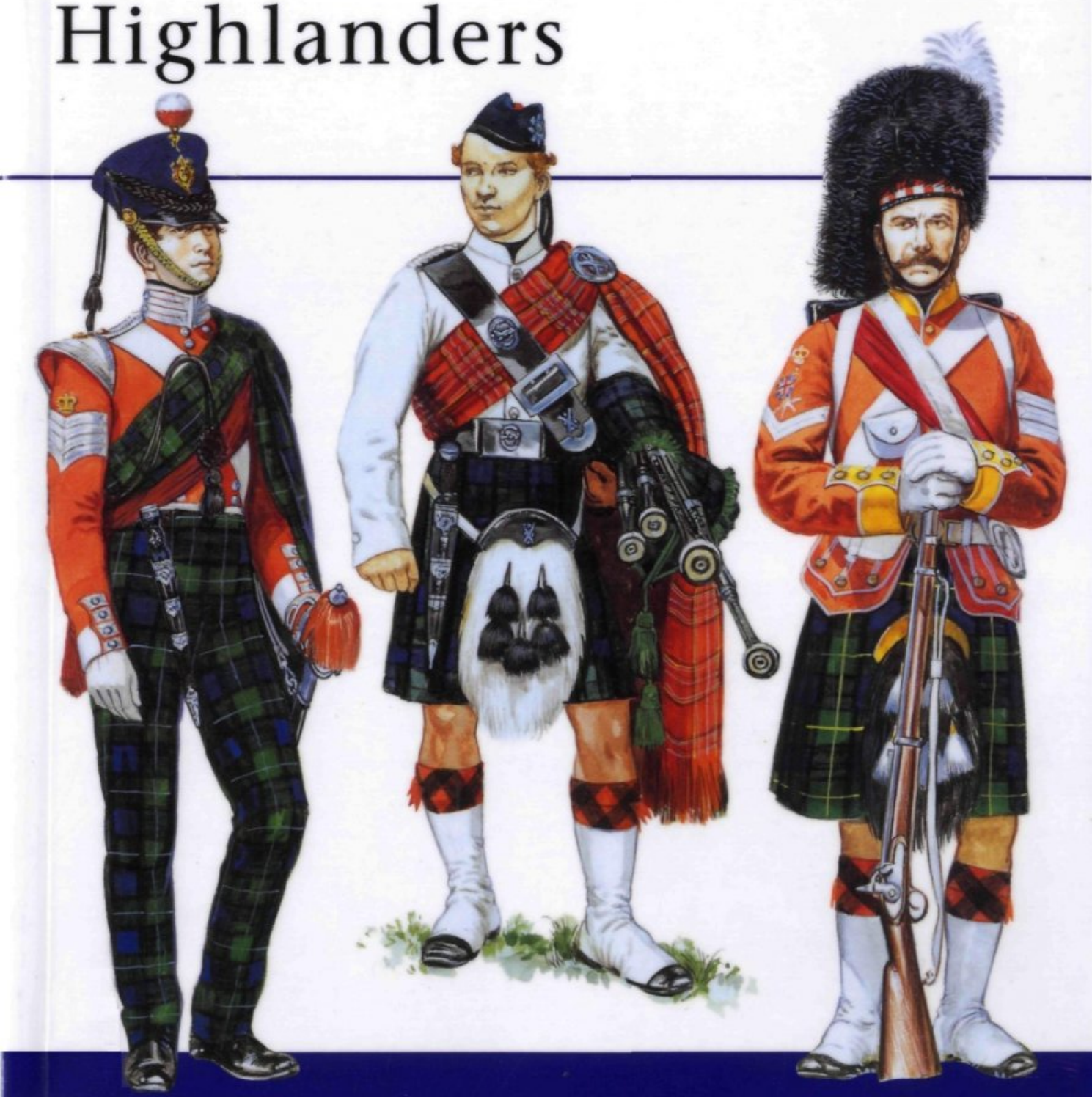
Queen Victoria's Highlanders



Stuart Reid • Illustrated by Gerry Embleton

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Dedication

For my mother, the master kilt-maker, who taught me how.

Artist's note

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OPPOSITE **1st Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders (hereafter in this text, e.g. 1/Seaforth) storming the Dervish *zareba* or defensive thorn hedge at Atbara during the Second Sudan War, 8 April 1898; inside was a stockaded position covered with rifle pits. The 1/Camerons also received this battle honour, and the correspondent G.W.Steevens was an eyewitness: 'Bullet and bayonet and butt, the whirlwind of Highlanders swept over...' The British assault cost 81 dead and 493 wounded, but was successful in just 40 minutes. The high reputation of the Highland regiments, and their colourful uniforms – at a time when the other Line regiments were going into battle in head-to-foot khaki drill – made them a favourite subject for military artists. (Print after Richard Caton Woodville)**

QUEEN VICTORIA'S HIGHLANDERS

INTRODUCTION

ON 28 MARCH 2006, the last of the British Army's Highland regiments officially passed out of existence, absorbed with their Lowland counterparts into a new, all-encompassing Royal Regiment of Scotland five battalions strong. From the first parade of the Black Watch at Aberfeldy in 1740, to that ceremony at Edinburgh Castle 266 years later, those Highland regiments had served the Crown with more than conspicuous gallantry in every corner of the globe, from Culloden Moor to Basra. Yet their true heyday unquestionably lay during the reign of Queen Victoria, in the bare century that separated the battles of Waterloo and Mons.

Waterloo helped, of course; but the real catalyst in turning them into crack regiments was, first, a visit to Dublin by King George IV in 1821, which featured a grand review of all but one of the kilted battalions; and a Royal visit to Scotland itself the following year, which just happened to coincide with the publication of a laudatory history of the Highland regiments by Colonel David Stewart of Garth. The king himself was persuaded to wear a kilt, and Highland regiments suddenly became fashionable.

Consequently, in March 1828 the well-known society diarist Thomas Creevy gleefully recorded that: 'We have an event in our family. Fergy has got a regiment – a tip top crack one – one of those beautiful Highland Regiments that were at Brussels, Quatre Bras and Waterloo.' The appointment of 'Fergy' – or to give him his full due, LtGen Sir Ronald Craufurd Ferguson – to be Colonel in Chief of the 79th (Cameron) Highlanders was indeed a matter for celebration, for the kilted regiments were already beginning to eclipse all but the Guards in popularity.

Their distinctive dress undoubtedly contributed to this air of exclusiveness, just as the outlandishly dashing uniforms of the Hussars had earlier made them the darlings of the cavalry. The French in particular also found the Scottish Highlanders fascinating and, having hurried to provide themselves with an equivalent in the exotically dressed Zouave regiments, they then took every opportunity to portray the two side by side. Both combined a striking appearance with an élan supposedly not found in ordinary regiments of the

***The Thin Red Line* – print after Sir Robert Gibb. This one painting more than any other, depicting the 93rd Highlanders at Balaclava in 1854, epitomizes how the Victorians saw their Highland soldiers. Copies were found in many Scottish homes, as well as in schools, libraries and other public institutions.**

Line. Those ordinary regiments were consequently wont to grumble that the Highland regiments (and the Zouaves) were the only ones written up in the newspapers, irrespective of who had actually done the work.

Nevertheless, there was no doubting the genuine popularity of the Highland regiments in Scotland itself. Soldiering there had always been far more highly regarded than in England or Ireland. In the 19th century the Highland regiments were seen by the

Detail of Gibb's *Thin Red Line*. The details of the soldiers' appearance are, perhaps surprisingly, very accurate, since Gibbs obtained an actual example of the 93rd uniform for his models. The 'Sutherland' dicing on the bonnets shows to advantage, and note particularly the badger-head sporran worn by the colour-sergeant on the 'right of the line' behind his officer.

A highly dramatized (and rather less artistically accomplished) depiction of Pte Edwards of the Black Watch winning the Victoria Cross at Tamai in the Sudan on 12 March 1884, when the advance alone of the front face of a British square opened gaps at two corners through which Dervishes charged inside, leading to confused hand-to-hand fighting. According to the citation: 'This man (who was attached to the Naval Brigade as Mule Driver) was beside the gun with Lieut. Almack RN and a bluejacket. Both the latter were killed and Edwards, after bayoneting two Arabs and himself receiving a wound from a spear, rejoined the ranks with his mules, and subsequently did good service in remaining by his gun throughout that action.' Edwards is wearing the red serge frock; his equip-ment appears to comprise a single pouch at the waist and, rather puzzlingly, a leather bandolier – the latter may have something to do with his attachment to the mules of the Naval Brigade's Gardner machine guns.

Scottish public in a very different light from the rest of the British Army. This was thanks to writers such as Sir Walter Scott and Stewart of Garth, building on a long-established cultural tradition; to the influence of Highland societies (not least the Gaelic Society of Inverness); and, above all, to the active and highly personal interest and support of Queen Victoria herself. Service in a Highland regiment was regarded as something admirable and a fine thing for a young man to aspire to, rather than as the last refuge of the desperate or destitute. Naturally this was also reflected inside the regiments themselves, and, as Surgeon Munro of the Argylls recalled: 'In these [the Highland regiments] there was a friendly intimacy between Officers and men, which by strangers might be looked upon as familiarity, but which was in reality the evidence of esteem and confidence in each other which knew no fear and was the result, not only of long companionship, but of a feeling of nationality.'

They were – and indeed still are – special regiments, notwithstanding all their amalgamations and disbandings; but their reputation came at a price. They paid it in blood, on battlefields from the windswept ridge above Balaclava to the burning plains of India. Having established a reputation as stormers, the Highland regiments felt themselves obliged as a matter of honour to live up to that reputation – both in helping to create the British Empire, and afterwards in the mud of Flanders and the killing-fields of the Somme.

BASIC CHRONOLOGY

It should of course be noted that this is a record solely of the services of those regiments designated as Highland units, and that those listed below did not march alone.[1]

As to organizational matters, it should also be noted that although some of the dates below relate to the promulgation of orders and warrants concerning the establishment of depots, amalgamations of battalions, and the according of Highland status to regiments, it frequently took some time for these to take effect – particularly if they were unpopular. For instance, on being designated as Highlanders in November 1845 the 74th Regiment adopted their new uniform immediately (see Plate B); but this was unusual, and on average it appears to have taken at least two years for trousered regiments to adopt Highland uniform and accoutrements. The 72nd, for example, became Highlanders in December 1823 but did not parade in Highland dress until August 1825. It subsequently became the 1st Battalion of the

1. For a listing of the relevant campaigns, which put the Highland regiments in the context of the other British and Imperial units at whose shoulders they fought, see MAA 193, 196, 198 & 201, *The British Army on Campaign 1816–53, 1854–56, 1856–81* and *1882–1902*, by Michael Barthorp.

Seaforth Highlanders in 1881, but once again did not parade in the new uniform until 1883. Similarly, the 75th officially became 1/Gordons on 1 July 1881, but did not parade in Highland dress until 18 June 1882. Conversely, when transformed into the 2nd Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry the 74th delayed adopting the Mackenzie tartan of the HLI for as long as possible, and still considered themselves a separate regiment from the 1st Bn (the old 71st) until they were disbanded – in 1947...

Officers of the 92nd Highlanders in the 1820s, by William Heath.

7 April 1809	72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th and 91st Regiments ordered to give up the kilt
18 June 1815	*Napoleonic Wars* end at Waterloo
1819	*Fifth Kaffir War* – 72nd Regiment
19 Dec 1823	72nd Regiment becomes 72nd or Duke of Albany's Own Highlanders
25 Apr 1825	Recruit depots ordered to be formed
1835	*Sixth Kaffir War* – 72nd Highlanders and 75th Regiment
1837–38	*Canadian Rebellion* – 71st and 93rd Highlanders; 73rd Regiment
1845	*Orange Free State Expedition* – 91st Regiment
4 Nov 1845	74th Regiment becomes 74th (Highland) Regiment
1846–47	*Seventh Kaffir War* – 73rd and 91st Regiments
1850–53	*Eighth Kaffir War* – 74th Highlanders; 73rd and 91st Regiments
1854–56	*Crimean War* – 42nd, 71st, 72nd, 79th, 92nd and 93rd Highlanders
28 Jan 1854	Pipe-major and five pipers officially authorized for each Highland regiment
9 Sept 1856	Depot Battalions to be formed as recruit pools, each for several regiments
1856–57	*Persian War* – 78th Highlanders
1857–59	*Indian Mutiny* – 71st, 72nd, 74th, 78th, 79th, 92nd and 93rd Highlanders; 73rd and 75th Regiments
12 May 1859	Official authorization for raising Rifle Volunteer corps
1863–64	*North-West Frontier campaign* – 71st, 79th and 93rd Highlanders
3 May 1864	91st (Argyllshire) Regiment becomes 91st Argyllshire Highlanders
29 July 1872	Localisation Act links battalions and establishes brigade depots
1873–74	*Ashanti War* – 42nd Highlanders and detachment from 79th Highlanders
10 July 1873	79th becomes Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
1878–79	*Second Afghan War* – 72nd, 78th and 92nd Highlanders
1879	*Zulu War* – 91st Highlanders

1881	*First Boer War* – 92nd Highlanders
1 May 1881	General Order No.41 amalgamates battalions into new named regiments, to take effect from 1 July
1882	*Egyptian War* – Black Watch, HLI (74th), Seaforths, Camerons, Gordons
1884–86	*First Sudan War* – Black Watch, Camerons, Gordons
1888	*North-West Frontier (Hazara)* – Seaforths
1891	*North-West Frontier (Hazara)* – Seaforths
1895	*North-West Frontier (Chitral)* – Seaforths
1 Apr 1897	2nd Battalion Cameron Highlanders formed
1897–98	*North-West Frontier* – Gordons
1898	*Second Sudan War* – Seaforths, Camerons
1899–1902	*Second Boer War* – all Highland regiments (inc. Volunteer service companies)
1908	*North-West Frontier (Mohmand)* – Seaforths
1914	Outbreak of World War I

REGIMENTAL EVOLUTION

The process of amalgamation which eventually culminated in the establishment of a single Scottish regiment in 2006 was a long one. At the outset of the Napoleonic Wars, which opened the 19th century, a total of 11 regular regiments were officially recognized as Highlanders, but by 1815 only five of them (with titles as given in the Army List for that year) still retained the full Highland dress:

42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment
78th (Highland) Regiment (Ross-shire Buffs)
79th Regiment (Cameron Highlanders)
92nd Regiment
93rd Regiment

A sixth regiment – the 71st (Highland) Regiment (Light Infantry) – had given up its kilts on being converted to the light infantry role in 1809, but nevertheless was still officially recognized as a Highland corps and was therefore permitted to continue wearing a 'Bonnet cocked as a Regulation Cap', and to have pipers in 'Highland garb'.

Five other regiments had also lost their kilts in 1809, but in their case this came about as the result of a pragmatic decision by the government that in order to encourage volunteering from English militia regiments, a number of Highland units 'should discontinue to wear in future the dress by which His Majesty's Regiments of Highlanders are distinguished.' These were the

72nd (Highland) Regiment
73rd (Highland) Regiment
74th (Highland) Regiment
75th (Highland) Regiment
91st Regiment

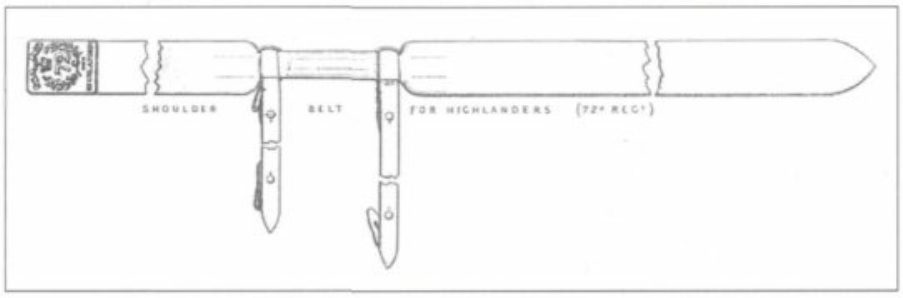
Officers of the 72nd Highlanders in an 1840s lithograph by Atkinson. Note the great length of the fringing on the shoulder plaids. (Compare this image with Plate C1, depicting an officer in the 1850s.)

Oddly enough, a sixth regiment to which this order was applied – the 94th (once known as the Scotch Brigade) – was a Lowland regiment raised in 1793, which had never worn the kilt, and its inclusion may therefore have been a mistake for the 93rd Highlanders. The latter may thus have escaped de-kilting through a simple bureaucratic error. Be that as it may, while the intention of making these units more attractive to English recruits was realized in the short term, the order was generally unpopular with the regiments concerned. Five of them still officially retained the Highland designation, no matter what their ethnic make-up; and most set about reclaiming their Scottish heritage as soon as the Napoleonic Wars had ended, although for some it was to be a long and frustrating process.

In 1820, the 91st obtained official sanction for the 'Argyllshire' title, which in practice it had used for many years; and in 1823 the 72nd did one better, gaining both the title 'Duke of Albany's Own Highlanders'[2] and a suitably striking uniform to match, which uniquely combined Highland feathered bonnets with red (Prince Charles Edward Stuart) trews or tartan trousers. The 71st, meanwhile, continued to mark their Highland status by the wearing of their unique headdress. When the rest of the infantry adopted a bell-topped shako (or 'chako'), they followed suit, but retained their distinctions – a blue cloth body rather than black felt, the diced band around the bottom, and a small flattened red tourie on top.

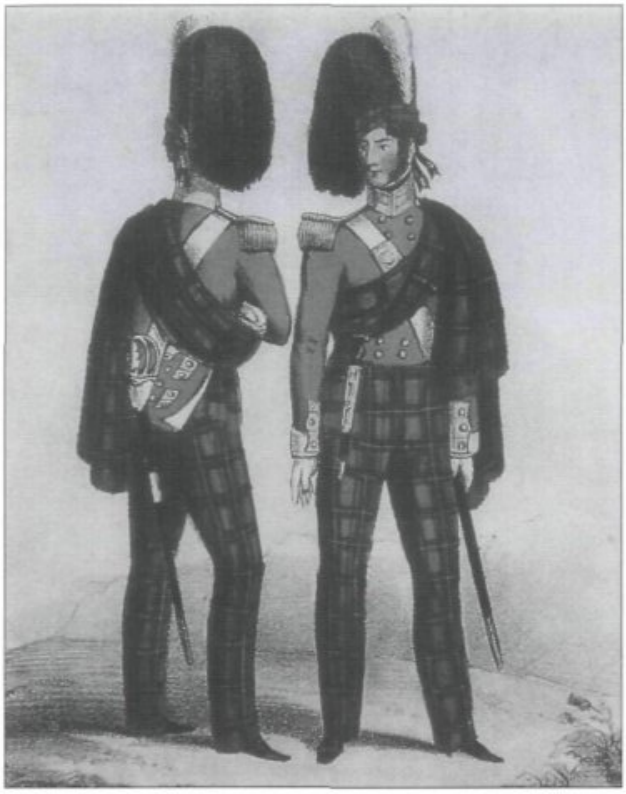
In April 1834, the 71st were also permitted to replace their plain trousers with Mackenzie tartan trews, and the officers were allowed the Highland 'scarf' or shoulder plaid.

Officers and private of the 71st (Highland) Regiment, 1840s, from Richard Cannon's *Historical Records*.



BELOW **This rather odd style of white buff leather shoulder belt, with slings, was adopted by the officers and some senior NCOs of Highland regiments after the Napoleonic Wars.**

2. The Duke of Albany was a Scottish title held by Frederick, Duke of York, the king's second son and at that time the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army.



The 74th were next; grudgingly redesignated as Highlanders in November 1845, they adopted a virtually identical uniform with so-called Lamont tartan trews (which was really the Government sett with a white overstripe); at the same time they acquired the same style of shako as worn by the 71st, rather than the feather bonnet sported by the 72nd. It was, however, made very clear that this was conditional on the regiment finding sufficient Scots recruits to justify the alteration:

'His Grace [the Duke of Wellington] cannot keep out of view the fact that it is found very difficult to complete the Highland Regiments already on the Establishment of the Army with Highland or even Scotch recruits and this state of things has rendered it occasionally necessary to extend their recruiting to other parts of the United Kingdom. As however Lieutenant Colonel Crabbe holds out sanguine expectations of being able to keep up the establishment of the 74th by means of its local influence in Scotland, the Commander in Chief yields to the Lieut. Colonel's assurances under that head, but with the direct understanding

Officers of the 72nd Highlanders, 1840s, from Richard Cannon's *Historical Records*. This appears to have been copied from the Atkinson lithograph (see page 7) with the two officers transposed.

Piper, officer and private of the 74th Highlanders, 1840s, from Richard Cannon's *Historical Records*. Although contemporary, this illustration shows significant differences from the Cunliffe painting discussed in the commentary to Plate B; the diced band on the officer's shako is erroneous. The most interesting figure is the piper. Cunliffe depicts two pipers, both wearing red coatees, but here he is clearly wearing one in regimental Lamont tartan.

that should their expectations be disappointed, the expedients resorted to in the cases of the other Highland regiments similarly circumstanced, will be resorted to in the case of the 74th Regiment, that is efficiency of numbers must be maintained from time to time by the other means alluded to if that indispensable object cannot be attained by the exertions of its own recruiting parties.'

As it happened, LtCol Crabbe left the regiment just a few months later; but his successor, 'Jock' Fordyce, took Wellington's admonitions very seriously indeed, and as Sergeant James Mackay remembered:

'When Colonel Fordyce joined the 74th as Major, the regiment had recently been created a Highland Corps, and when he obtained his Lieutenant Colonelcy and the command of the Regiment, to make it a truly Scottish Corps, he gave a portion out of his pocket to all Scotch recruits joining... Some of the recruits he got were not of the most sterling stuff, the recruiting parties kidnapping anything Scotch they could get their hands upon about the Tontine, Glasgow or Peter Crears, Glasgow [both these areas were notorious drinking dens].'

Perhaps not surprisingly, there was then something of a hiatus in the process. In 1861 the 73rd and 75th became the 'Perthshire' and 'Stirlingshire' regiments respectively; but these titles – although reflecting their near-forgotten origins – did not confer Highland status, and the only change to their uniforms was the addition of diced bands for their forage caps, while the officers of the 73rd were also permitted to place the arms of Perth on their 'appointments'.

Finally, however, on 3 May 1864, the 91st (Argyllshire) Regiment became the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders. The change in title was a subtle one, but it was sufficient to justify the adoption of Campbell of Cawdor tartan trews (Government sett with red and light blue overstripes) by all ranks, and a diced band on their shakos like that worn by the 71st and 74th Highlanders.

Highland officers, engraved from photographs by James Ferguson in 1866. On foot (left to right): 74th, in full dress; 72nd, undress; 92nd, probably in drill order and wearing a shoulder belt rather than the usual sling belt; 78th in mess dress; and 71st in drill order. The mounted officers at the rear are from the 71st and 42nd respectively.

Localisation and amalgamation

The next and altogether more significant step in the evolution of the Highland regiments came in 1872, with the introduction of an Army-wide scheme called 'Localisation'.

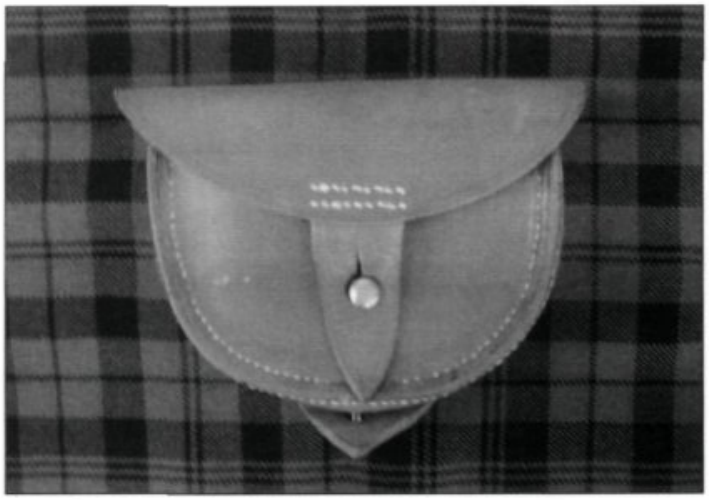
In 1820, following the Napoleonic Wars, Great Britain had been divided up into a number of recruiting districts, each with its own inspecting officers; but at first no attempt was made to link regiments permanently with particular districts

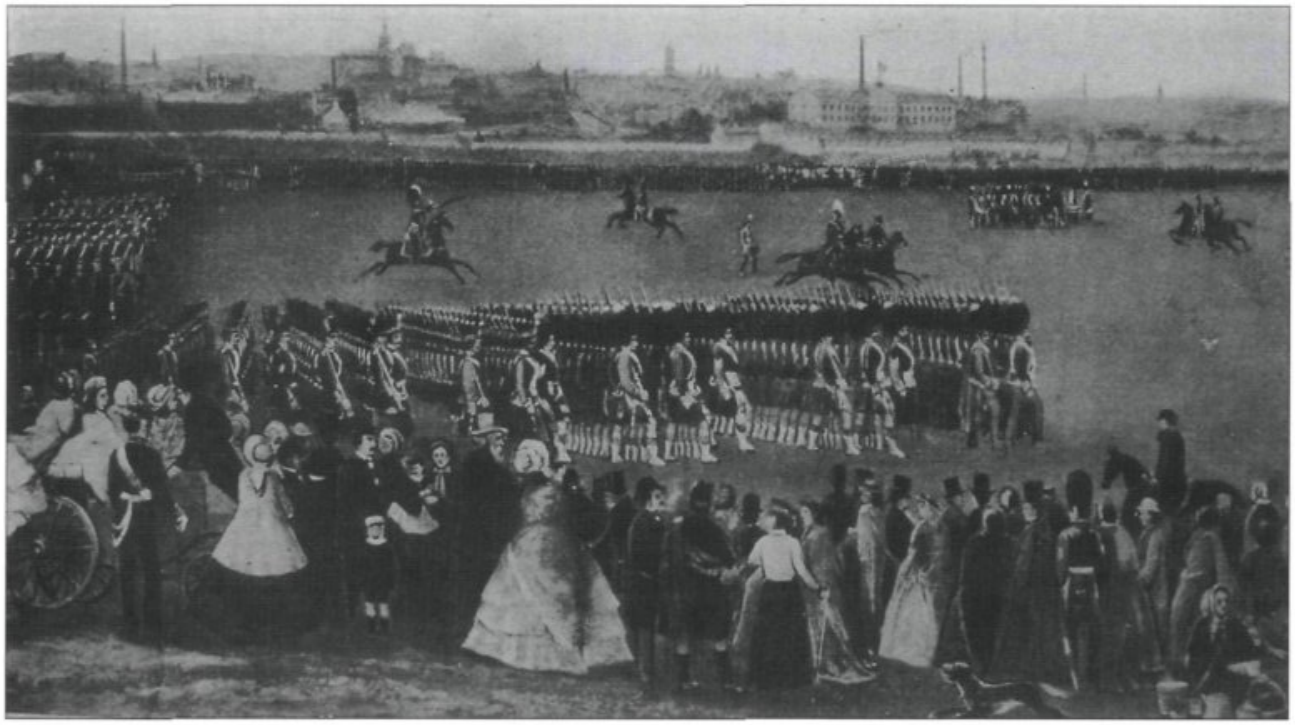
Lithograph, based on photographs, by James Ferguson, 1866. Left to right: private, 79th Highlanders in foul weather marching order – note the oilskin cover on the bonnet and the buttoned-back greatcoat; drummer, 93rd; private, 92nd; pioneer, 78th; and private, 42nd.

(despite the rather hopeful allocation of county titles to some English regiments as long ago as 1782). Instead the British Army's regiments remained free to recruit anywhere they pleased, without regard to those titles; not only was the whole of Scotland designated as a single 'North British' district, but English units that happened to be stationed north of the border were just as likely to recruit there as elsewhere.

Given the wide geographical spread of the North British District, it was, unsurprisingly, further divided into five sub-districts based on Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Inverness and Aberdeen. Once again, however, the recruitment of men within these districts was a somewhat *ad hoc* affair. The establishment of local ties was further hampered: firstly by the fact that throughout the first half of the 19th century all of the Highland regiments were invariably stationed in Ireland when not serving abroad; and secondly by the constant need to bring regiments up to strength before going abroad, by drafting in men from other units. Whenever possible, of course, these drafts were taken from other Highland regiments, but it was not always practical to do so. On the outbreak of the Crimean War most of the men in the 92nd depot volunteered into the 42nd and the 79th; but the service companies of the regiment at Gibraltar were stripped to a bare cadre in order to fill out the ranks of three 'English' regiments. This practice obviously created great difficulties for those units being milked of their best men – especially if they themselves were subsequently ordered to go overseas.

The Pattern 1859 ball bag or expense pouch was fitted on the waistbelt on the right of the buckle, and held ten rounds and an oil bottle. It could be worn as part of the soldier's fighting kit, or by itself when mounting guard. This particular example is of brown leather rather than white buff, indicating use by a Volunteer unit.





The advent of the Volunteer Movement in the 1850s brought about a revival of the old Scottish custom of holding annual Wapinschaws or 'weapon-showings', as a combination of military review and shooting competition. In this detail of a painting depicting the Aberdeen Wapinschaw of 8 July 1862, the regular Depot Battalion from the Castlehill Barracks, led by the 72nd companies, is seen parading on the Queen's Links.

Drafting was only a short-term solution to the problem, and as the Crimean War escalated an experiment was tried of grouping the depot companies together into Depot Battalions. The intention was that their recruits would thereby be pooled, and sent to whichever of the parent units required them, thus avoiding the need to draft men from other units. This innovation proved successful. For example, in 1863 the Aberdeen Depot Battalion was a very large unit, comprising companies from all of the Highland regiments except the 74th.

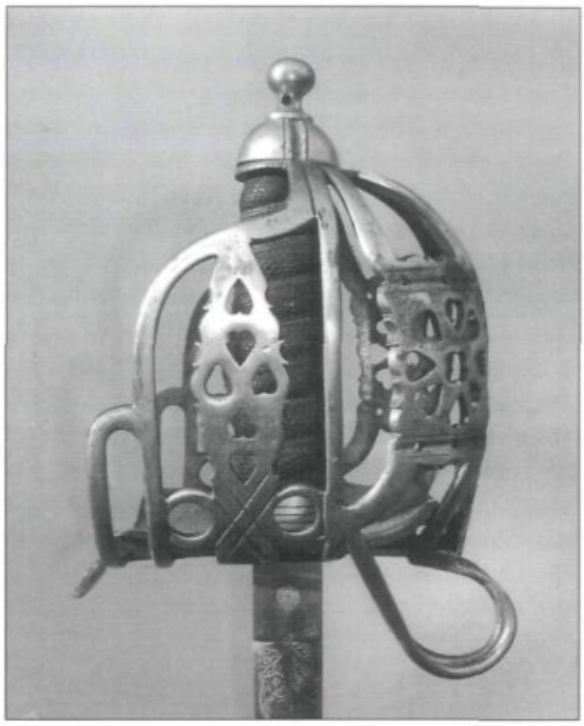
Understandably enough, such large depots were found to be both unwieldy and difficult to accommodate. Consequently, in 1870 a new system of pairing was introduced, whereby the depot companies of single-battalion regiments serving overseas were attached to quite different regiments serving at home, with the intention that the host regiment would be first in line to provide any additional reinforcement drafts. At the time, for example, the 78th Highlanders were stationed in Canada, but their depot companies went to the 93rd Highlanders at Aberdeen; similarly the 79th, stationed in India, had theirs attached to the 42nd at Aldershot. Although it was a step forward, no one seems to have been particularly happy with these arrangements, since they still led to the drafting of men from the service companies of the home regiment. In July 1872 pairing was superseded by Edward Cardwell's 'Localisation' scheme.

Cardwell, Stanley and Childers, 1872–81

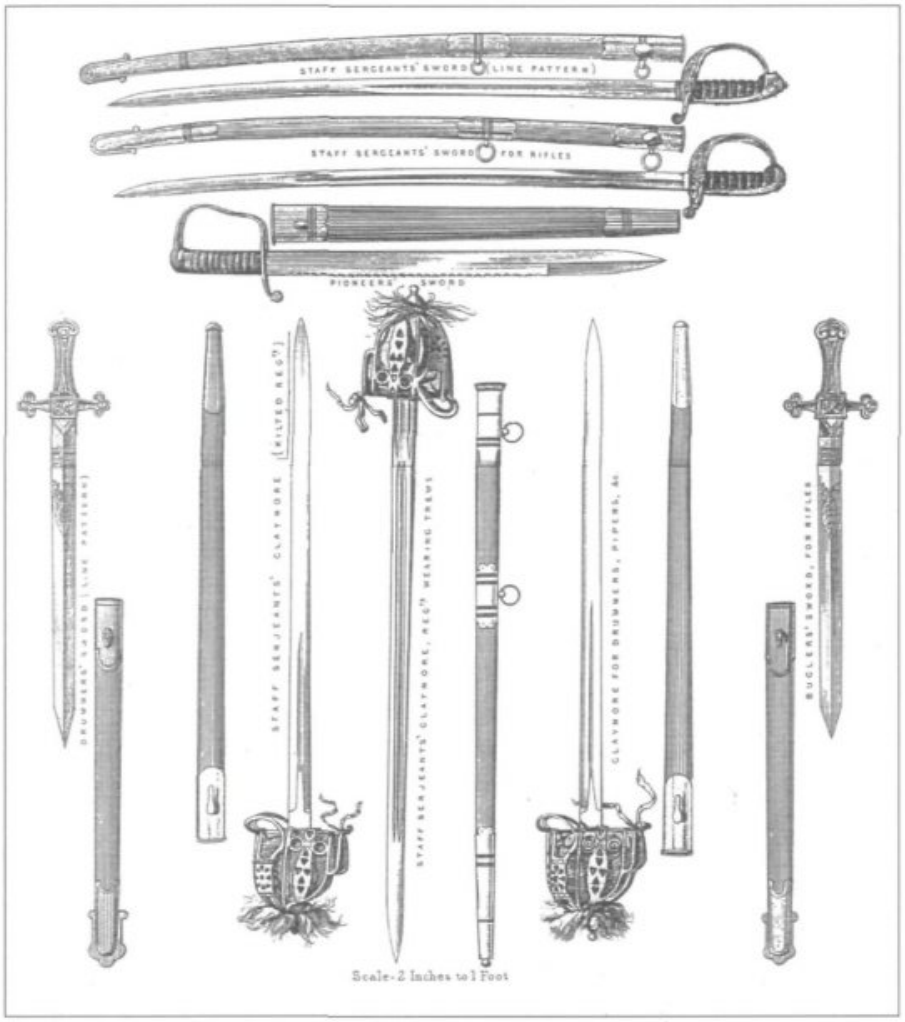
Under this new scheme no fewer than 70 infantry regimental sub-districts were formed throughout Great Britain, each comprising a county or group of counties supposedly containing a sufficiently large population to sustain two battalions. The 25 most senior regiments already comprised two battalions; now the others, including all the Highland regiments, were linked into pairs, sharing a joint 'Brigade

Depot'. For instance, No.55 Sub-District comprised the counties of Inverness, Elgin, Nairn, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland and Caithness, together with the Orkney and Shetland Islands; and this region was allotted for recruiting purposes to the 71st and 78th Highlanders. The Brigade Depot was established at Fort George, Ardersier; and in addition to the four depot companies belonging to the two regular regiments, it included the headquarters and permanent staff not only of the local Militia units, but the Rifle Volunteer battalions as well (see below).

No sooner was the Cardwell scheme in place and seen to be working – albeit not entirely to the liking of some of those concerned – when in 1877 the first tentative suggestion was made by the Stanley Committee that the process ought to be taken to its logical conclusion. The committee suggested that the local brigades be henceforth 'treated as one regiment, such regiment bearing a Territorial designation; the Line Battalions being the 1st and 2nd; the Militia Battalions the 3rd and 4th'.



On 28 September 1828 all Highland regiments were ordered to adopt this steel-hilted broadsword, although in some regiments pipers and bandsmen – whose equipment was provided at the officers' expense – continued to carry the older brass-hilted 1798 pattern until the 1850s. The 1828 pattern is still used with Highland uniform today, but sadly the quality of workmanship is no longer what it once was.

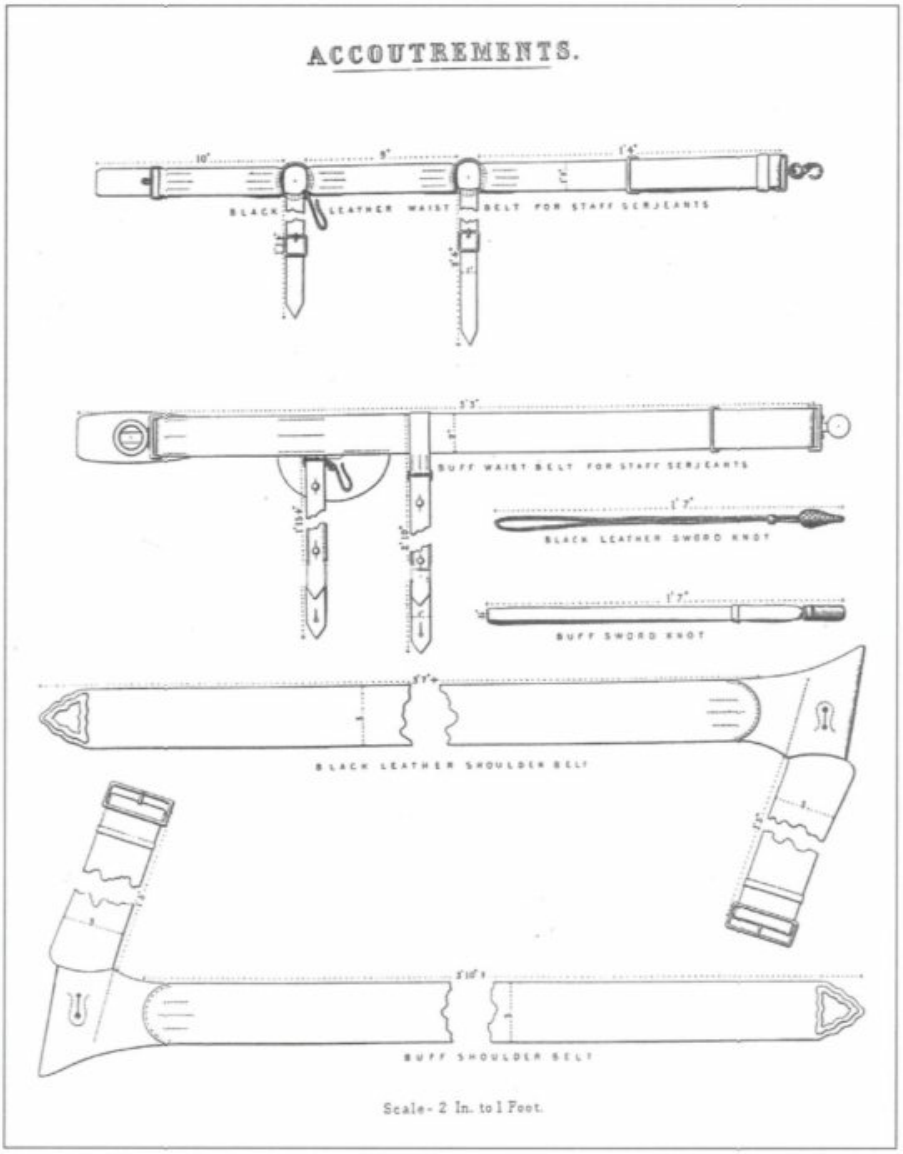


Enlisted ranks' swords, 1865. (Top) two staff sergeants' swords, for Line and Rifles units, and the saw-backed pioneer sword. Below, left to right: drummer's sword, Line; staff sergeants' 'Claymores' – broadswords – for kilted and unkilted regiments (note the subtle differences), and for drummers and pipers; and bugler's sword, Rifles. The broadswords are of the still current 1828 pattern.

Under the Stanley proposals, the 42nd and 79th Highlanders, both of which were Royal regiments (the 79th having become the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in 1873), were to become the 'Black Watch and Cameron Royal Highland Regiment (Queen's Own)', with a depot at Perth. On the face of it this was a straightforward enough proposal; but at the Hamilton Depot in Lanarkshire the staunchly Lowland 26th (Cameronian) Regiment was supposedly to be joined with the 74th Highlanders, to form the 'Cameronian Highland Regiment'; while the 73rd and 90th Regiments were both to lose their existing Perthshire titles to become something called the 'Royal Lanarkshire Light Infantry'.

Less controversially, it was proposed that at Fort George the 71st and 78th should be formally combined as the 'Inverness and Ross Regiment (Highland Light Infantry)', while at Stirling the 72nd and 91st were to become the 'Argyllshire Regiment'. Finally, the 92nd and 93rd would be retitled the 'Gordon and Sutherland Highland Regiment', based at Aberdeen. Missing from these proposals was the 75th Foot, which despite its adoption of the Stirlingshire title in 1862 was still considered

OPPOSITE **Major and Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Lachlan Mackinnon, 1st Volunteer Bn, Gordon Highlanders, in 1904 – a particularly fine portrait, illustrating his badges in some detail. The plaid brooch is effectively a plain ring mounted with the cap-badge, itself based on the Gordon family crest. The Hindoostan Tiger on his collar was inherited from the old 75th Foot, who had earned it the hard way at Seringapatam in 1799. Note the Volunteer Decoration pinned to his plaid.**


ACCOUTREMENTS.
BLACK LEATHER WAIST BELT FOR STAFF SERJEANTS
BUFF WAIST BELT FOR STAFF SERJEANTS
BLACK LEATHER SWORD KNOT
BUFF SWORD KNOT
BLACK LEATHER SHOULDER BELT
BUFF SHOULDER BELT
Scale - 2 In. to 1 Foot.

Pipers and senior NCOs carried their broadswords in shoulder belts or baldrics as shown here, black leather (top & third drawings) being used by pipers, and whitened buff (second & fourth) by the NCOs. The plain buckles and slides depicted in this 1865 illustration were often replaced by larger and much more elaborate ones of regimental pattern, especially when worn by pipers.

OPPOSITE **Officer and sergeant, Capetown Highlanders, 1900. This Volunteer unit, formed in South Africa in 1885, was affiliated to the Gordon Highlanders and wore that regiment's tartan, but otherwise patterned most of its uniform after that of the Argylls, including badger-head sporrans for officers and NCOs and Sutherland dicing on their Glengarrys. Like many Volunteer units, they wore silver lace rather than gold, and the expensive feathered bonnet was not worn.**

sufficiently English at this time to be paired off with the 39th Foot, and allocated a depot at Dorchester in faraway Dorset.

From a practical point of view Col Stanley's recommendations had some merit, although most of the projected titles were rather too clumsy to win widespread acceptance. Nevertheless, when the scheme was made reality by his successor as Secretary of State for War, Hugh Childers, in 1881, an entirely different set of pairings came about – as a direct result of the intransigence of the 79th Highlanders.

The 42nd and the 79th had been closely associated for some time, and as Royal regiments their proposed amalgamation under the original Cardwell scheme had much to recommend it; but the sticking point turned out to be the tartan. In anticipation of the proposed amalgamations, on 28 January 1881 the Adjutant General enquired (by telegraph) of the 79th, if they were to be permanently linked to the 42nd, 'will your Regiment adopt tartan of 42nd Regiment. Linked regiments must wear same tartan.' From the relative safety of Gibraltar, the response (again by telegraph) was an immediate flat refusal: 'No – The Cameron Highlanders will not adopt 42nd tartan.' Even the Gaelic Society of Inverness managed to get itself involved in the matter, and a thoroughly harassed Childers subsequently complained to the House of Commons that 'The Scottish regiments require particular treatment. Some most extraordinary misconceptions appear to exist about projects affecting them and their uniforms which never entered my mind.' Worse still, Her Majesty herself, who had a particular affinity for the regiment, also took an unhelpful interest in the proposals, and with her active support the Camerons eventually retained both their independence and their tartan. In so doing they set in train a complex and sometimes controversial chain of exchanges.

First, the 42nd were instead joined with the 73rd (Perthshire) Regiment to become the Black Watch. On paper this was quite an inspired move, for although no longer a Royal regiment, nor even a Highland one (being predominantly English in composition), the 73rd had originally been raised a century earlier, in 1780, as the 2/42nd. This was sufficient to overcome any misgivings about the union, and meant that its original intended partner, the 90th, was combined instead with the 26th Foot as the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). This in turn meant that a new partner was now required for the 74th; they were joined instead by the 71st, to form the

Highland Light Infantry – a deeply unpopular move. Neither battalion felt any affinity for the other, and both bitterly resented being based at Hamilton, outside Glasgow, rather than in a Highland area.

On the other hand, up at Fort George the 78th were then combined with the 72nd, and since both battalions had originally been raised by (different) Mackenzies of Seaforth they quite naturally and happily became the Seaforth Highlanders. Moving the 72nd from Stirling then meant that a new partner was required for the 91st; so the 93rd were brought down from Aberdeen, to join with them as the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This left the 92nd to be paired with the predominantly English 75th to form the Gordon Highlanders.

Officially, the long-heralded amalgamations took effect on 1 July 1881. The previous evening the officers of the 92nd held a wake, culminating at midnight with a dramatically torch-lit funeral procession, and the burial of a small coffin containing a camp colour bearing the number 92. Next morning it was discovered to general amusement that the coffin had been exhumed, and words had been added to the flag after the number: 'and no deid yet'. It was an old regimental joke, but a prophetic one. Quite coincidentally, B Company of the 75th had also held a mock funeral that night, and even erected a gravestone in the Floriana lines at Malta, with the inscription:

BELOW **Officers of the Seaforth Highlanders photographed on a field day, c.1900.**

BELOW RIGHT **Private of a Territorial battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, c.1908, on a field day; painting by Caton Woodville. Note the good conduct stripe and signaller's badge on his left forearm. Field days were a curious institution which effectively required soldiers to conduct tactical exercises, usually for the edification of inspecting officers and other interested spectators, while wearing what was to all intents and purposes full dress.**

Here lies the poor old Seventy-Fifth
But, under God's protection
They'll rise again in kilt and hose
A glorious resurrection!
For by the transformation power
Of Parliamentary laws
We go to bed the Seventy-Fifth
And rise the Ninety-Twas!

At first sight it might have made more sense to leave the 93rd at Aberdeen, and to send the 75th to Stirling rather than turning it into a Highland regiment, for it was predominantly recruited and led by Englishmen; as a Camerons officer smugly commented, their subsequent appearance in kilts 'was the subject of much merriment'. Nevertheless, this particular amalgamation turned out to be a conspicuously successful one. Histories of the Gordon Highlanders conventionally begin with the raising of the 92nd (or 100th as they then were) in 1794, and while the more senior 75th is graciously acknowledged to have been a good regiment, comparatively little is recorded of their deeds prior to the amalgamation.

Sergeant and drummer of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 1900. Dressed for a field day, the drummer carries only a bugle. Note the rolled haversack on his left hip; and also the 'rifle guard' panel buttoned across on the sergeant's left shoulder.

This well-known photograph from the *Navy and Army Illustrated* depicts Sgt Seymour of 2/Gordons undergoing mounted infantry training at Aldershot in 1896. The buff-coloured Bedford cord breeches and blue puttees were worn by all members of the battalion 'transport'.

Private and sergeant of the Black Watch, early 1900s, by Caton Woodville; they wear guard order and drill order respectively. Note the sharp rising point at the rear of the spats.

The surprising readiness of the 75th Stirlingshire to embrace so wholeheartedly the ethos of a Highland regiment was symbolic of the entire process. The Childers scheme in its final version – 'framed after careful consultation with the Commanding Officers of the Scotch Regiments and special regard ... to the strong feelings entertained by the men of various clans for their special tartans', went far beyond mere bureaucratic convenience. The reference to so-called 'clan' tartans shows how thoroughly bamboozled Childers had been by the storm of protest (accompanied by mischievous rumours of a proposed universal 'Childers' tartan). Ultimately, however, the result of all this reshuffling was that each of the kilted regiments in the northern depots (with the exception of the solitary Camerons) was now paired with a non-kilted one. What was more, irrespective of seniority in the Line, in every case it was the uniform – and to a very large extent the identity – of the kilted battalion that was adopted in its entirety by the new regiment (no doubt to the great satisfaction of the Gaelic Society).

Conversely, at the Hamilton Depot there was no such happy co-operation between the two battalions of the new Highland Light Infantry. For some time they pointedly ignored each other, and 2/HLI still privately referred to themselves as the 74th until they were 'stood down' – disbanded – in 1947. In fact it was not until 1906, a full 25 years after the amalgamation was imposed, that a regimental committee was finally able to agree on harmonizing the still surprisingly different dress and appointments of the two battalions.

Volunteers

In May 1859 the government had, a touch reluctantly, given official sanction to the raising of Rifle Volunteer corps, intended for local defence in support of the near-moribund Militia. Initially little more than patriotically inclined shooting clubs, these Volunteers quickly grew into a genuinely popular national movement. At first each corps was in effect an independent company, but such was the rapid growth of the movement that all concerned quickly appreciated the advantages of grouping the various companies into battalions. The first to be formed north of the Forth was the 6th (later 1st) Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers in March 1860. In 1871 control of the Volunteers passed from the Lord Lieutenants of the Counties in which they were raised to the Secretary of State for War. That minister lost no time in attaching them to the new Brigade Depots the following year, with the intention not only of bringing them under more effective control, but also of making regular instructors available to improve their efficiency and ultimately their usefulness.

By 1881 all of the Rifle Volunteers had formed proper battalions, and at that time – in accordance with the earlier Stanley recommendations – the old statutory Militia battalions in each district were permanently linked to its regular regiment and fully adopted its uniform.

The local Rifle Volunteer Battalions also agreed to do the same; indeed, they were often conspicuously keen to do so, although the fact that they initially provided their own uniforms meant that they still retained a fair degree of individuality. Not all of them adopted the kilt, and generally the Glengarry was worn instead of the more expensive feathered bonnet. On the other hand, two of the volunteer battalions attached to the trousered HLI wore the kilt; one, later the 6th (City of Glasgow) Bn, very properly wore the regiment's Mackenzie tartan, but the 9th (Glasgow Highlanders) had originally modelled their uniforms on those of the 42nd, and so clung on to their Black Watch kilts.

Naturally, the regulars at first questioned the effectiveness of these volunteer battalions, but the question was amply answered during the Boer War, when service companies drawn from the Volunteers were attached to their affiliated regular units. So successful was this experiment that under the Haldane reforms of 1908 the Militia battalions were effectively disbanded and merged with the Depots to form Special Reserve Battalions, whose sole function was to process reservists and recruits for the regular battalions. The Volunteer battalions were then re-designated as Territorials, and yet more closely integrated with their parent units. Thus the 1st Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers, who had become the 1st Volunteer Bn Gordon Highlanders in 1884, were transformed into the 4th Bn Gordon Highlanders in 1908. Similarly, the 1st Inverness-shire Rifle Volunteers successively became the 1st Volunteer Bn Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, and then the 4th Bn Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

Major-General Andrew Wauchope, Black Watch, killed in action at Magersfontein, South Africa, in December 1899 while leading the Highland Brigade. Note the three layers of cloth at the wrist: doublet, starched shirt cuff, and undershirt.

'Brave Highland Men' – regimental recruitment

The allocation of Hamilton in Lanarkshire as the depot for the Highland Light Infantry might have been a bitter disappointment to the new regiment, especially as it meant that it was still denied the kilt; but it was also a pragmatic decision which reflected the reality of the situation. There was a limit to the number of recruits who could still be found among the relatively sparse population of the Highlands, but there were more than enough men in Glasgow with a Highland background or connections. In fact, the character and composition of the Highland regiments was by no means as clear-cut as might at first appear. Once all the amalgamations had been carried through there were a total of ten Scottish infantry regiments (not counting the Scots Guards), of which five wore trousers and five were kilted. As can be seen on

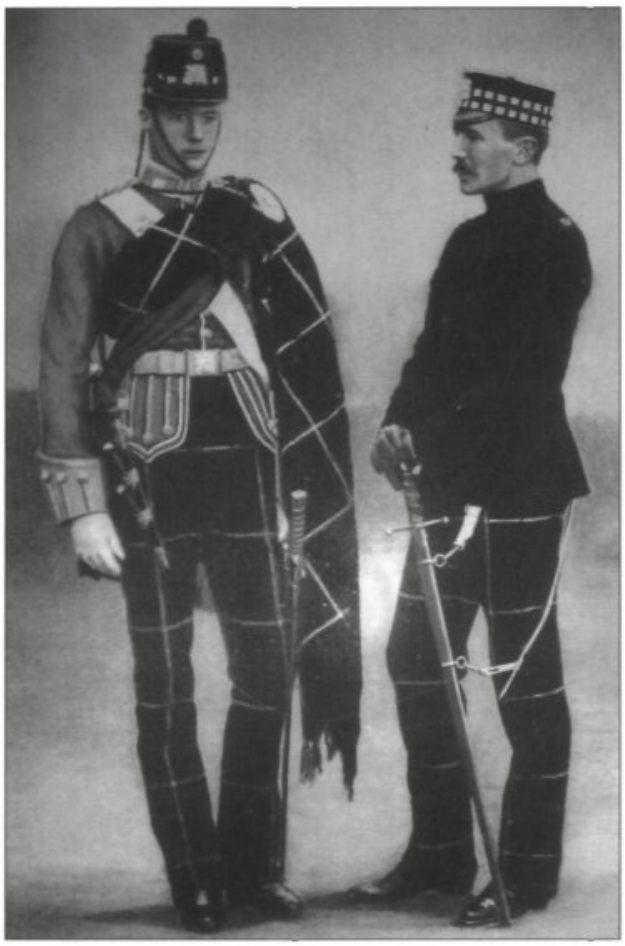
the accompanying map, there was a very straightforward geographical spilt between them: all of Scotland north of the Rivers Forth and Clyde was exclusively given over to the kilted Highland regiments, while the Lowland regiments recruited south of them.

It should be stressed that although recruits were obviously encouraged to join their local regiment, there was no question of their being compelled to do so. Typically, for example, in 1885 only 94 out of 195 recruits at Aberdeen went to the Gordon Highlanders; a further 55 went to other infantry battalions and 12 to the Scots Guards, with most of the remainder going to the cavalry, Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers. At Inverness, by contrast, there were only 46 recruits that year, of whom 28 joined the Camerons, 10 went to other battalions (mainly the Seaforths), and one to the Scots Guards.

Although retaining the Sutherland name, the new Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (A&SH), based at Stirling Castle, were allocated the whole of the south-western Highlands including Argyllshire, together with most of the Inner Hebrides – although in practice they actually obtained most of their recruits much closer to hand. Captain Stuart complained in 1891 that there was a strong prejudice against the army in Argyll, 'mostly among the older people who bring strong family influence to bear on such of the young men who are disposed to enlist'.

Perhaps the best indicator of where these 'new' Highland regiments did find their recruits is the distribution of their Volunteer or Territorial battalions. The Argylls had no fewer than five Volunteer battalions, with two based in Renfrewshire on the north side of the Firth of Clyde, one headquartered at Paisley in Lanarkshire, and another at Stirling – all four of these were not only predominantly Lowland areas, but industrial or semi-industrial. Only the Argyllshire battalion, based at Dunoon but maintaining detachments as far out as the island of Jura, could properly be considered as recruiting from a Highland area.

Under the 1881 reforms the Seaforths, for their part, were allocated the whole country north of Inverness, together with the adjacent counties of Moray and Nairn to the east. This not only comprised the regiment's original recruiting areas in Ross-shire and the northern part of the Outer Hebrides, but also included the county of Sutherland, which thereby lost its long-standing connection with the 93rd Highlanders. By way of underlining the fact, the Sutherland Rifle Volunteers, based at Golspie, then became a part of the Seaforths, although they defiantly insisted on retaining the Sutherland tartan. The regiment's two other Volunteer battalions were based at Dingwall and Elgin respectively. Clearly, the regiment would have had no difficulty in filling its ranks with 'real' Highlanders.



Officers of the Highland Light Infantry, c.1900, instantly identifiable as belonging to the 1st Battalion by their cross-hilted broadswords. The officer on the right wears the forage cap and dark blue patrol jacket.

On the other hand, the single-battalion Camerons soon encountered problems. They were allocated a large swathe of country immediately to the south and west of Inverness, including the Isle of Skye and the southern end of the Long Island, as well as Lochaber, where the regiment had first been raised in 1793. However, wide as the area was, the 1885 figures show that it proved difficult to find many recruits there. In 1891, LtCol Leslie grumbled to the Wantage Committee on recruiting that:

> Inverness-shire as a regimental district is miserable in its unproductiveness; the districts are congested, the men are addicted to slothfulness and have a stay-at-home inclination, moreover the teaching of the Free Church and the political agitators interfere with our recruiting efforts in those districts; as a matter of fact there are too many men for the districts, and yet they will not enlist.

Recruitment districts of Highland regiments post-1881. Far from their being confined to what is generally understood by the term 'Highlands', Scotland north of the rivers Forth and Clyde was entirely given over to the kilted regiments, while the non-kilted Highland Light Infantry effectively became a Glasgow regiment. Since the thinly populated district allocated to the Camerons could only sustain one battalion, the regiment's 2nd Bn, authorized in 1897, was allowed to recruit anywhere in Scotland.

Whatever the truth of this, it was apparent that without a regular 2nd Bn (and with only one Volunteer battalion) the regiment was struggling to maintain its operational strength. For a time there were persistent rumours that the Camerons might after all lose their independence, to become the 3rd Bn, Scots Guards. These rumours attained some substance in 1892 when the Wantage Committee, considering both LtCol Leslie's submission and the dismal recruiting figures that accompanied it, prop-osed that the regiment either be disbanded or amagamated with the Scots Guards – 'The above measure would probably not be unacceptable to the Cameron Highlanders as it would give them increased pay and prolonged periods of home service.' However, the committee did admit – with a certain delicacy, given this unorthodox way of raising a Household battalion – that 'There would doubtless be difficulties of a personal

A splendid study by Richard Caton Woodville of a private of the HLI in guard-mounting order, c.1903. Note the obsolete belt order, depicted here as brown tanned leather rather than whitened buff.

character to overcome'. The Camerons were having none of it, and once again Her Majesty intervened to put a stop to the proposal. Instead, in March 1897 authority was finally given to raise a 2nd Bn for the regiment, and in recognition of the difficulties in finding sufficient men in Inverness-shire it was allowed to recruit anywhere in Scotland.

Similarly, the Black Watch was historically a Perthshire regiment, but its officers and men increasingly came from the adjoining country of Forfar, and especially around Dundee and Arbroath, and (perhaps surprisingly) from the old Kingdom of Fife as well. Of its four Volunteer/Territorial battalions, only one was raised in Perthshire and the others were based at Dundee, Arbroath and St Andrews respectively.

Likewise the Gordons were fortunate enough to retain the old 92nd's links to Aberdeenshire and the other counties of north-east Scotland, but once again the degree to which this could be considered a Highland area was at best questionable. Of their four Volunteer/Territorial battalions, one (the former 1st Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers) was drawn from the city of Aberdeen itself; 5/Gordons (as they became) were recruited in Buchan and Formartine, a Lowland area to the north of the city; 6/Gordons (Banff and Donside) had perhaps three companies from Highland areas, while the remaining five were chiefly recruited from coastal fishing villages. Similarly, 7/Gordons (Deeside Highland Bn) had only three companies which could genuinely be reckoned as recruited in the Highlands; three other companies were based in the Mearns, a coastal lowland area to the south of Aberdeen, and the remaining two in outlying suburbs of Aberdeen itself.

Oddly, there were also the two Shetland companies. According to local legend, the allocation of the Shetland Islands as a recruiting area for the Gordons came about because on most maps of Britain the Islands – lying far to the north of the mainland – are depicted within insets placed on the page closely adjacent to Aberdeen. Consequently, the story goes, the War Office clerks carelessly failed to realize that they actually lie hundreds of miles to the north. It is a good story, but the more prosaic reality is that the Shetlands are normally more easily accessed by means of the 'north boats' sailing from Aberdeen than by the long overland journey from Inverness.

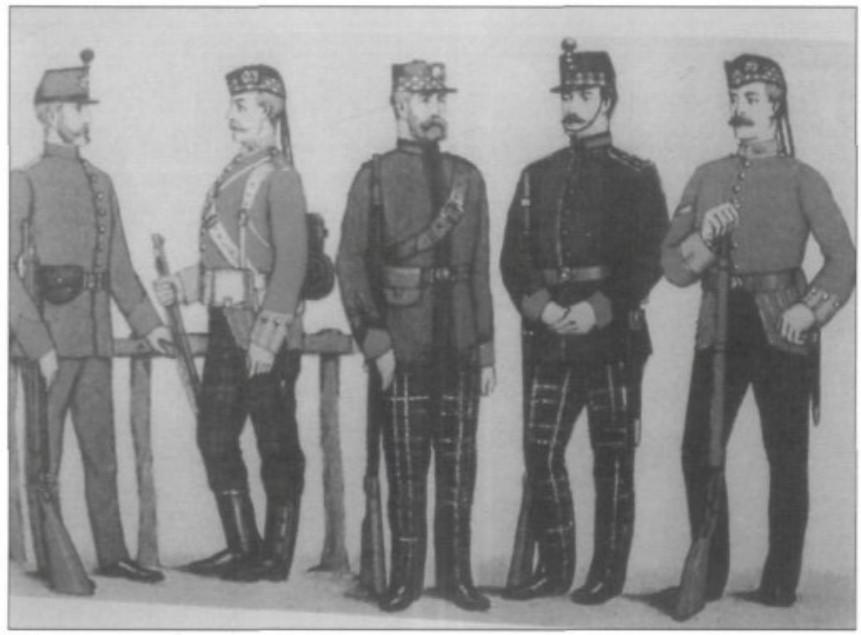
Pipers

Pipers always have been integral to the character of Highland regiments, setting much of the tone of individual units, and being considered arbiters of 'Highlandness' as well as a superior class of musician. The former role became increasingly important as the proportion of 'genuine' Highland recruits in most regiments diminished. Wedderburn of the 42nd recorded how in 1852 he attended a 'competition of the Pipers, Highland Games etc.' on the bowling green at Stirling Castle. 'Our old Pipe Major McLean and Ross were the two best... The 79th Pipe Major had no chance, the dancing was splendid and the broadsword very good.'

Nevertheless, the history of pipers in Highland regiments is not as straightforward as it might appear. They are said to have been officially authorized as late as January 1854, although prior to that date their presence was usually (but not invariably) tolerated by inspecting officers. In fact, in the various Letters of Service granted for the raising of Highland regiments in the 1790s, pipers are routinely substituted for the two fifers ordinarily authorized as part of the establishment of the regimental grenadier company. In practice, of course, there were always more than two pipers in each regiment, and most companies probably had at least one. They were often carried on the books as private soldiers or NCOs but maintained by a subscription raised among the officers for the purpose – just as they contributed as a matter of course towards the cost of the band.

In November 1853 the Adjutant General commented that '... there is no desire to discontinue or even to reduce the number of their pipers, provided the number of men, allowed to be employed as musicians, shall not be exceeded, and that they are at full liberty to employ ten men as pipers, provided they reduce the number of Drummers from 17 to 10, and the Musicians in the band to 18, in place of 21.' On reflection this arrangement was considered to be a little too informal, and on 28 January 1854 some at least of these 'additional' pipers were officially authorized. The establishment of Highland regiments was augmented by 'the addition of one Pipe Major at one shilling and ten pence per diem; and five Pipers at one shilling and a penny each per diem'. Notwithstanding this official authorization, the proprietorial interest which the officers exercised over the pipers survived in the custom of permitting captains of companies to place their personal arms on the reverse of the pipe-banners displayed on ceremonial occasions.

Having thus gained official sanction at last, the pipers then proceeded to usurp the



Volunteer units affiliated to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, from Grierson's *Records of the Scottish Volunteer Force 1859–1908*. Left to right: 3rd Bn, Renfrewshire Volunteers, in grey with red collar and cuffs; 3rd Volunteer Bn, A&SH, red doublet with yellow collar and cuffs, tartan trews; 3rd Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers, in grey with black braid and red facings; 1st Stirlingshire Bn, in dark green with red facings; 4th Volunteer Bn, A&SH, in uniform similar to 3rd Bn but with brown belts.

Sergeant James Sutherland (left) of the Sutherland Rifle Volunteers, from Kenneth Macleay's *Highlanders of Scotland* (1870). Sutherland is wearing the 1868 pattern doublet, with yellow facings displayed on the collar and shoulder straps only – the cuffs are red. The kilt is the so-called Sutherland sett, and the hose are patterned after those worn by the Camerons, with a green check on red.

importance of the band. In ordinary regiments of the Line the drummers were primarily signallers; as dispersed light infantry-style tactics gradually became the norm over the course of the 19th century, they adopted bugles for that purpose instead, although still continuing to be called drummers and retaining their drums for ceremonial occasions. When music was required the regiment turned to its band. Highland regiments did things rather differently. In the first place, many of the 'calls' which governed daily routines, from reveille to lights out, in an age before the widespread ownership of watches, were performed by pipers rather than the drummers; but the most important change took place in the second half of the 19th century.

After the pipers were officially added to the regimental establishments in 1854 (and there is evidence that the practice may have begun even earlier), they and the drummers developed the habit of playing together as a 'pipe band' in competition to the regimental band. Unsurprisingly, the pipers quickly achieved an ascendancy over the longer established instrumentalists. On 4 August 1871, Standing Orders for the 91st declared that: 'Her Majesty the Queen having directed that the Regiment will *on all* occasions march past to the Pipes, this will take effect from this date. When marching past the Pipes will fall in in front of the Band.' The bandsmen may not have liked it but, although the process was piecemeal, this edict was circulated to all of the Highland regiments that summer; thereafter, the pipe bands never looked back.

(continued on page 33)

79th (CAMERON) HIGHLANDERS, 1830s

1: Private, Centre Company

2: Lance-sergeant

3: Ensign

A

74th HIGHLANDERS, 1840s

1: Sergeant-major

2: Private, full dress

3: Private, walking-out dress

72nd (DUKE OF ALBANY'S)
HIGHLANDERS, 1850s
1: Officer
2: Private
3: Pipe-major
2
1
3

C

92nd (GORDON) HIGHLANDERS, 1860s

1: Major Forbes McBean

2: Piper

3: Colour-sergeant

D

91st (ARGYLL) AND 93rd (SUTHERLAND) HIGHLANDERS, 1870s
1: Quartermaster, 91st
2: Sergeant, 93rd
3: Pioneer corporal, 93rd
93
1
2
3

E

BLACK WATCH (ROYAL HIGHLANDERS), 1880s

1: Captain

2: Piper, drill order

3: Regimental policeman

SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS, 1890s

1: Private

2: Drummer

3: Tailor

G

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY, 1900s

1: Sergeant bugler

2: Pipe sergeant

3: Private

A Volunteer officer, Capt Alexander Skene, 1st Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers. For a time the battalion wore rifle-green, but in 1879 they applied for their uniform to 'be assimilated to that of the 92nd Gordon Highlanders, viz:- officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates – doublets and Gordon tartan trews; officers' undress patrol jackets as per regulation; head-dress – helmet and Glengarry ornament – St Andrews Cross in silver; accoutrements – white patent leather belts and black patent leather pouches'. Their first parade in the new uniform on 15 May 1880 was reckoned to be a 'brilliant spectacle'.

HIGHLAND UNIFORM: GENERALITIES

During the Napoleonic Wars the uniform and equipment of the Highland regiments conformed very closely to that of other infantry units, with the obvious difference that kilt and hose were (usually) substituted for trousers, and a feathered bonnet for the military cap or shako. However, after the celebrated visit of King George IV to Scotland in 1822 and the subsequent wave of romanticism about Scotland in general and the Highlands in particular, the Highland uniform developed into something quite unique.

Bonnets

The distinctive feathered bonnet was originally known as the Kilmarnock bonnet from its place of manufacture, and began as a rather heavy, round, flat cap, knitted and felted from dark blue wool. In 1903 a version of this flat bonnet was reintroduced to replace the full dress helmet then worn by the Lowlanders of the Royal Scots and the King's Own Scottish Borderers; but the original was stiffened and 'cocked' up into a drum shape, which by the early 19th century had acquired a diced or chequered band around the bottom half. At the same time, however, the ostrich feathers originally attached behind the cockade had effectively overwhelmed the cap, to become its dominant feature. Consequently, by the 1850s the original pattern Kilmarnock bonnet had been discarded and replaced with a version of the shako as worn by the 71st and 74th. This was made of dark blue cloth stretched over a wire frame, with a hand-knitted diced band around the bottom. Unlike the shako, however, the crown was domed at the top; and once the ostrich feathers were attached around the outside, the result was a much 'shaggier' appearance than before – sometimes mistaken for bearskin.

The ostrich feathers themselves were of two types: the relatively small 'flats' which formed the body, and the larger curved 'fox-tails' which hung down over the right ear. The Black Watch bonnets sported four of these latter, while the Seaforths, Camerons and Gordons had five, and the Argylls no fewer than six. In addition, a very large vulture-feather hackle was worn above the left ear; this was normally white, but the 42nd/Black Watch famously wore a scarlet hackle, as did some drummers and musicians of other regiments.

Without the addition of these feathers the original Kilmarnock was known as a 'hummel (humble) bonnet'. The latter term did not denote a particular design but simply meant a plain bonnet, lacking any feathers or other ornament beyond the usual diced band – and even that was omitted by the 42nd, who wore plain blue bonnets. Hummel bonnets were generally worn as a fatigue or undress cap during the first half of the 19th century, but came to be considered ugly and unmilitary;

In 1884 the 1st Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers became the 1st Volunteer Battalion Gordon Highlanders and, as seen in this photograph of LtCol Douglass Duncan, began to adopt their parent regiment's uniform more fully. A kilted company was formed in 1895, and the rest of the battalion gradually followed suit as the state of the battalion funds permitted.

in the 1850s they began to be superseded by the much neater Glengarry, although that did not become regulation for all regiments until 1874.

Jackets

The evolution of the Highland jacket is discussed in some detail in the commentaries to the colour plates. Up until 1855 it was identical to that worn by ordinary regiments of the Line, except that the skirts or tails were somewhat shorter. In January of that year the old coatee was ordered to be replaced with a much more modern double-breasted tunic for regiments of the Line, and with a unique double-breasted 'doublet' for Highland regiments (see Plate C). The doublet differed from the tunic in that the skirts were replaced by four so-called 'Inverness flaps'. Those at the front were positioned sufficiently far apart to accommodate the sporran in between, while the corresponding gap at the rear was filled by two much smaller skirts or tabs. All buttons were diamond-shaped rather than round. There was no historical precedent for this garment or for those buttons, but it was eventually adopted by all Scottish units, whether or not designated as Highlanders, and it still survives in some forms today.

The double-breasted design was altered to a single-breasted one with round buttons in 1856; and in 1873 a plainer version or 'frock' made from serge was introduced for wear in hot weather at home and abroad (see Plate G1). Although retaining the gauntlet cuffs of the doublet (albeit without the facing colour, which was now displayed only on the collar), this frock was cut more like a tunic, except that the front was cut to slope away in order to accommodate the sporran. This basic design formed the basis of the khaki service dress adopted in the 1900s.

As an undress, for drill, fatigues or barrack dress, Highland regiments (like the Footguards) wore plain white shell jackets, with a standing collar. For most of the period in question officers paraded in a drill jacket of similar cut, made of scarlet material with facing colours on the collar and pointed cuffs, but in 1906 they too adopted white jackets.

Kilts, plaids and trews

The kilt was made from a single length of tartan plaiding woven on a 27in (69cm) width – half that of broadcloth. When laid out, approximately two-thirds of the garment is flat and the central one-third pleated. The pleated section is worn at the rear, while the two flat parts are folded left over right to form the front 'apron'. Modern kilts tend to be cut with a low waist, corresponding to contemporary fashion for trousers; but traditionally the full width of the material was used, resulting in a waistband which reached the lower ribs, and provided proper protection for the kidneys.

Originally all kilts were box-pleated at the rear. These pleats were essentially gathers, sewn at the top and pressed flat below, but in the

1820s this began to be replaced with the rather more elegant knife-pleating which gives the kilt its characteristic 'swing' when marching. However, the Seaforths, Camerons and A&SH tailored their kilts with a hybrid box pleat, which was constructed in the same way as knife-pleating while preserving the flat outward face of the original box pleats – although the two styles cannot be told apart at any distance. The Black Watch, Gordons and A&SH kilts had 31 pleats at the rear, the Seaforths had 34 and the Camerons just 22.

The pleating was only one way of achieving a distinctive appearance. Another, rather more important one was in the actual arrangement of the tartan used to make the kilt. The Black Watch and A&SH both used the same tartan, albeit in a slightly darker tone for the former – playing up to their 'black'. Similarly, the HLI and the Seaforths both used the MacKenzie tartan, which was the Government sett with the addition of two white overstripes and one red overstripe. The Seaforths cut their kilts so that a single red overstripe ran down the centre of the apron at the front (see Plate G3), while the HLI had two vertical red stripes on the apron (see Plate H2). The kilts worn by officers and men of the Gordons are similarly distinguished from each other. By way of a further distinction the kilts worn by officers and some senior NCOs were not only made from a superior grade of cloth, but were also much lighter in tone, allowing the detail of the sett to be distinguished more clearly.

In addition to their regimental dress, it was also common for officers to possess so-called 'mufti' kilts for wear off-duty at Highland gatherings and the like. These were sometimes made up according to the individual officer's fancy, perhaps in his 'clan' tartan. After attending a Highland Gathering at Chobham Camp in 1853, John Wedderburn, a Black Watch officer, grumbled that his commanding officer 'spoke to me about

Pipers of 2/Highland Light Infantry demonstrate the sword dance, while stationed on Jersey in 1904, in this print after a painting by M.Orange. The uniforms are particularly well observed. The nonchalant gentleman wearing a feathered bonnet is the sergeant bugler – see Plate H1. Note also the difference between the dancer's sporran with three black tails, and that of the pipe-major on the left.

wearing the mufti kilt, as he does not like it, so I shall now never appear out of uniform'. On the other hand, as it was not part of their official uniform it appears that officers of trousered regiments sometimes had mufti kilts in their regiment's tartan.

Originally pins were the sole means of adjustment, fastening and support for the kilt, although buttons are used to secure the waistband of two surviving early 92nd kilts. Neither method is entirely satisfactory, since the buttons do not allow for adjustment and pins will damage the fabric. Consequently, straps and buckles were fitted at the waist on either side of the aprons. When this change came about is unrecorded, but it probably first appeared on officers' kilts, and was used by all ranks of most regiments by the end of Queen Victoria's reign. An exception was the Black Watch, who continued to use straight pins at the top and bottom of the kilt as late as 1914, but this seems to have been a regimental affectation. Otherwise the kilt-pin was now a decorative item, usually fastened to the outer apron only, and in some regiments that of the officers and senior NCOs was embellished with green ribbons, the A&SH's arrangement being particularly elaborate (see Plate E2).

Officially, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars the Highland uniform was still the old belted plaid rather than the kilt, and indeed the term survived until the end of Victoria's reign. In reality the cloak-like plaid had not been worn for years, but its appearance was preserved on formal parades by the wearing of the 'fly plaid' – a relatively small piece of tartan material pinned on the left shoulder and hanging down behind with a long fringe at the bottom (see Plate A). In the early days officers also wore the fly plaid with the kilt, but for the most part this was gradually superseded by the 'Highland scarf' or 'shoulder plaid'. A much larger piece of tartan than the fly plaid, this was tightly folded in the middle (latterly with the folds sewn down for neatness and convenience), passing under the right arm and crossing over the left shoulder to hang down almost to knee length front and rear. At first it was worn with trews, but later with the kilt as well, by officers, some senior NCOs, pipers and bandsmen.

Early Kilmarnock bonnet of heavily knitted and felted wool, with a diced band in white, red, and green at the junctions of those colours. The bonnet is seen here in its plain or 'hummel' form as used in undress. When it was 'mounted' the ostrich feathers completely obscured the blue crown and tourie, which was eventually replaced by a lighter cloth crown stretched up over a wire frame.

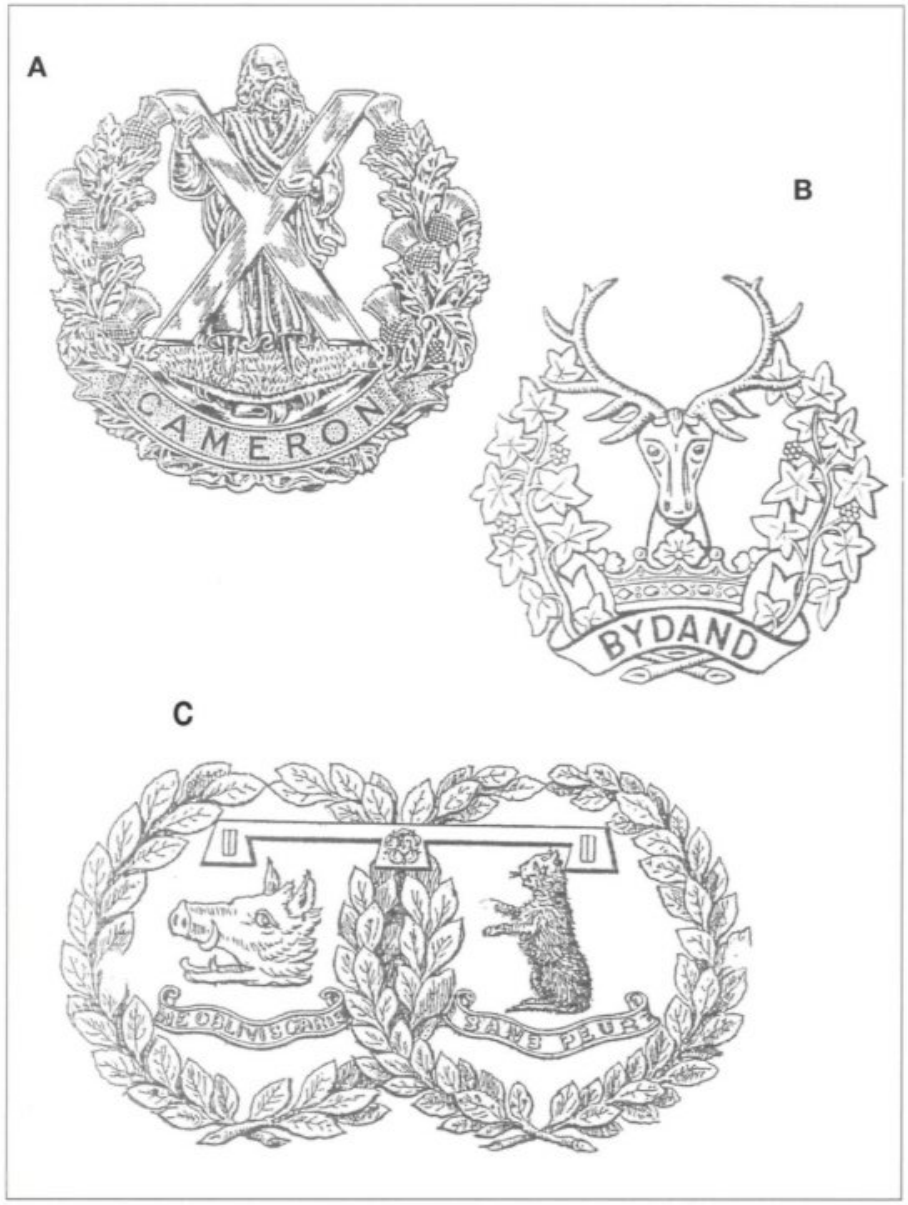
The trews, worn for all duties by non-kilted regiments and as an undress for kilted ones, are really tartan trousers rather than the original close-fitting *truibhs*. Being worn comparatively loose on the leg means that there is no need to cut the material on the cross for the sake of flexibility, thus saving on material, and allowing the checks to be displayed vertically and horizontally as on the kilt, rather than diagonally as was the case with the earlier *truibhs*. Nevertheless, their construction was still subtly different in that they were only seamed up the inside leg in order to properly display the sett on the outside.

Latterly tartan 'pantaloons' were worn by mounted officers – that is, the field officers, adjutant and sometimes regimental staff officers such as the quartermaster. Unlike trews, these pantaloons were close-fitting, with straps under

the feet and usually worn tucked inside Wellington boots, rather than outside the boots as was the case with trews.

Hose

Below the knee, kilted regiments traditionally wore diced hose, originally white with a gingham-like pink/red diagonal check and cut from woven 'hose cloth' rather than knitted. Exactly when the change-over to knitted hose occurred is uncertain. Generally it is held to have come about in the late 1840s, but some earlier portraits show hose with the turned-over tops usually associated with the knitted variety. At any rate, some unrelated alteration in colouring also took place around that time. Colonel Maule of the 79th (Cameron) Highlanders, always keen to ensure that his regiment was seen as something special, changed the base colour of his men's hose to green, like their facings; following his example, the 42nd and 92nd, and the pipers of the 72nd, changed to a black background during the 1850s.



Cap badges of (A) Cameron Highlanders and (B) Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and (C) collar badge of Gordon Highlanders (not to scale).

Following the adoption of their green doublets in 1855, the pipers in some regiments took to wearing hose knitted in the regimental tartan– MacKenzie for the 78th Seaforths and 71st/Highland Light Infantry. Officers also took to wearing these tartan hose as an undress or for 'mufti' in the 1860s and, in the way of things, they were also sometimes adopted by senior NCOs. Eventually plain Lovat Green hose would be adopted for undress by all ranks, although this was not officially sanctioned until after World War II.

Spats

During the Napoleonic Wars all infantry regiments, whether kilted or not, wore a combination of low-cut shoes and short grey or black gaiters, but in 1823 trousered regiments adopted half-boots in place of shoes, and happily discarded their gaiters. For a time, however, kilted regiments retained the low shoes, since the combination of boots and

A field officer and the regimental sergeant-major of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, photographed in the *Navy and Army Illustrated*, 1896. The close-fitting tartan trousers worn by mounted officers were now referred to as 'pantaloons' rather than trews. Note the long fringing on the 'Highland scarves' or shoulder plaids.

diced hose was considered unsightly. Eventually they compromised by wearing boots and white gaiters or spats, although 'highland shoes' were retained for certain orders of dress (see Plate H2).

The spats became an important feature of Highland dress in their own right, and ochre-coloured ones were also worn on active service until replaced by puttees in 1914/15. The wearing of gaiters in all seasons also facilitated the use of 'hose-tops' or footless hose, in combination with ordinary socks, as an economy measure.

Sporrans

After the tartan, in whatever form it was displayed, the sporran provided one of the more distinctive means of identifying regiments – both on the parade ground and in black-and-white photographs. The sporran itself was originally a leather bag slung on the front of the kilt in lieu of pockets, but by way of improving its appearance it began to be faced first with goatskin and then with horsehair. Outwardly it comprised three main elements: the

cantle across the top, usually of metal but sometimes patent leather; the body, which for a time assumed the dimensions and appearance of a pinafore; and the bells, tassels and tails which decorated it.

A number of variations can be seen in both the colour plates and other illustrations in this book, but the most important differences for officers were set out in the 1900 Dress Regulations:

'In the Royal Highlanders [Black Watch] – White horse-hair. The sporran top is in frosted gilt metal, edged with thistles. Thistle leaves at each side and in the centre. Above the centre thistle St Andrew and cross. Five gold bullion tassels suspended by looped gold cord.

'In the Seaforth Highlanders – White horse-hair. The sporran top is in burnished gilt metal engraved with a thistle on either side. In the centre, in silver, two sprays of thistle with the scrolls inscribed "Cuidich'n Righ" on the lower bend. On the top of the sprays the scrolls inscribed with some of the honours of the Regiment. Between the sprays a stag's head. Above the stag's head two other scrolls inscribed with the remaining honours of the Regiment. Two long black horse-hair tassels with gilt sockets. Sockets engraved with thistles and leaves.

'In the Gordon Highlanders – White horse-hair. Gilt metal top, engraved with thistles and ornamental edges. In the centre, badges as for waistbelt in silver. Five gold bullion tassels hanging from looped gold cord. *The heads of the tassels in dead and bright gold.*

'In the Cameron Highlanders – Grey horse-hair. Sporran top in frosted gilt metal. In the centre, an elliptical ring, inscribed "The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders", within an oak-leaf wreath. Within the ring, on a burnished gilt ground, a thistle surmounted by a crown in silver. On either side of the oak-leaf scroll are sprays of thistles. On the lower portion of the wreath and sprays, a scroll inscribed "Peninsula, Egypt, Waterloo". Six gold bullion tassels suspended by blue and gold twisted cords.

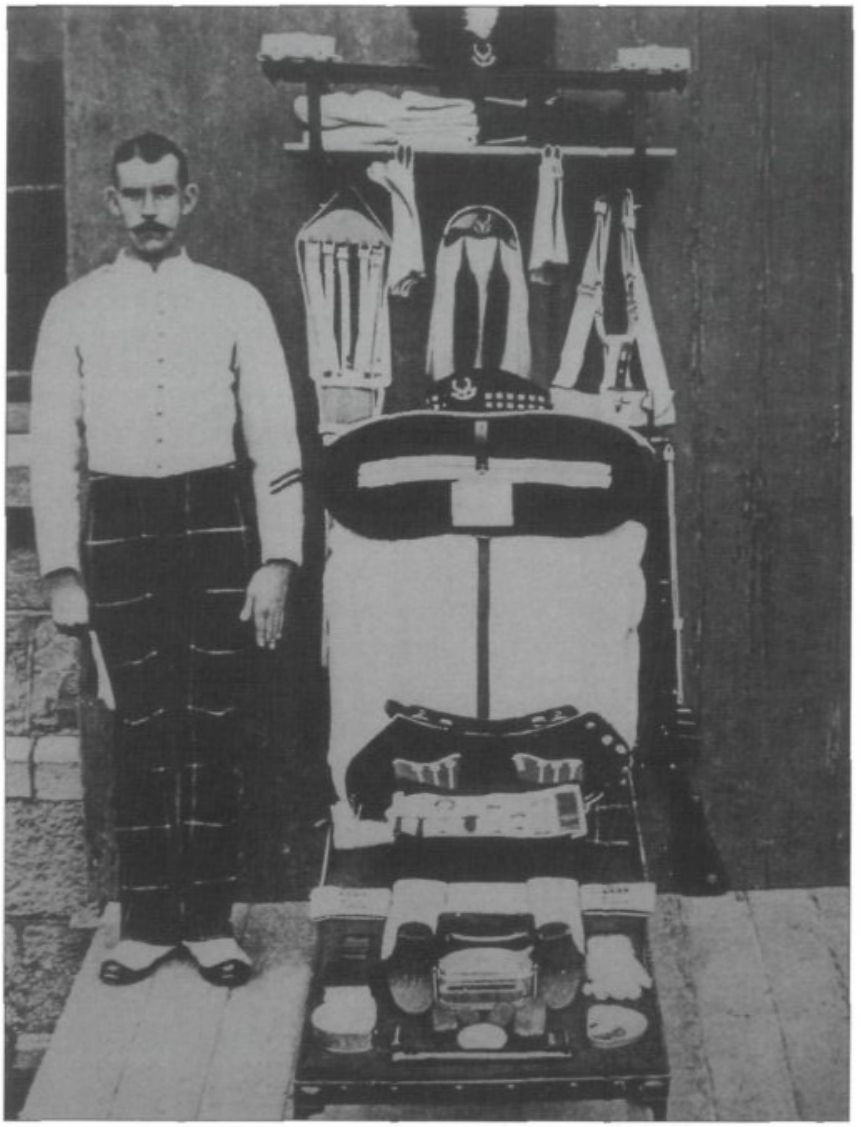
'In the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders – Engraved gilt top, special shape (five-sided) square edges with centre in enamel. On the centre, the boar's head and scroll, the coronet with cypher, and the cat and scroll similar in design to the full dress head-dress. Five small gold bullion tassels with netted head suspended by looped gold cords.'

The regulations also insisted that the bullion tassels were only to be worn in Review Order and had to be removable in regiments not adopting an undress sporran. In practice all five regiments did so:

'In the Royal Highlanders – White horse-hair. Top as for the full dress sporran. Five short black horse-hair tassels in black patent leather sockets.

'In the Seaforth Highlanders – As for full dress.

Officer, 92nd Highlanders, 1840s. This print usefully illustrates how the decorative tassels, bells and tails on the sporran evolved from the cords *originally used to fasten it.*



Private, Seaforth Highlanders, 1890s, in barrack dress, with kit laid out as for an inspection, from the *Navy and Army Illustrated*. On close examination (see extreme left) it is obvious that this is a demonstration photograph, specially posed on some wooden staging erected outside the barrack block.

'In the Gordon Highlanders – White horse-hair. Top as for full dress. Two long black horse-hair tassels, suspended from gilt metal sockets and chains. Sockets engraved with thistles.

'In the Cameron Highlanders – Black horse-hair. Black leather top. On the top, in silver, St Andrew and cross, between sprays of thistle. Two long white horse-hair tassels in black leather sockets.

'In the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders – a badger head forms the top. Six short white horse-hair tassels, with thistle leaf sockets in gilt metal, suspended by looped gold wire cord.'

The sporrans of the rank and file were not covered in the regulations, which only applied to officers' uniforms, but generally followed the officers' undress patterns, except in the Argylls, where badger heads were restricted to NCOs. Similarly, no mention is made of HLI sporrans since, officially, none of the commissioned officers wore kilts on duty at this period. Ordinarily, however, HLI personnel wearing kilts had a white horse-hair sporran with three long black horse-hair tassels.

PLATE COMMENTARIES

Evolution of uniform and regimental distinctions

In order to provide a sense of cohesion and continuity to what is necessarily a complex subject, each of the regular Highland regiments is represented by a single plate, depicting some of the different forms of dress worn on home service, according to regulation and 'tribal' practice, during just one decade of Queen Victoria's reign and afterwards, between the 1830s and the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

A: 79th (CAMERON) HIGHLANDERS, 1830s

A1: Private, Centre Company
A2: Lance-sergeant (rear view)
A3: Ensign

The principal figures in this plate are largely based on a full-length portrait of Ensign Richard Taylor, who was commissioned into the regiment without purchase on 11 December 1835; and on a contemporary series of paintings in the Royal Collection by Alexandre-Jean Dubois Drahonnet, which includes a good study of 582 Pte Alexander Ritchie of the 79th Highlanders, and an unusual but very useful rear view of a lance-sergeant in the 92nd Highlanders, both dated to 1833.

The uniforms depicted here are typical of those worn by all the kilted regiments in the immediate post-Waterloo period. For officers there was a rather high 'Prussian' collar, tightly fastened with hooks and completely covered with gold or silver lace. There were also heavier bullion epaulettes and wings and, for the rank and file, thickly tufted wings on each shoulder. These wings were once the distinguishing mark of the elite flank companies, but in 1822 the whole of the 92nd Highlanders were granted the right to wear them, and the same privilege was subsequently extended to all the other Highland regiments in 1831. Similarly, the feather bonnets were also becoming larger and more extravagant, now being some 14in (35.5cm) high; and in 1829, in common with other regiments of the Line, Highland regiments except the 42nd had adopted the plain white hackles formerly restricted to grenadiers.

When Dubois Drahonnet painted Private Ritchie **(A1)** in 1833, each infantry regiment still had a unique pattern of coloured threads in the white lace worn by the rank and file, edging the collar and shoulder straps and formed into loops at the buttonholes. However, just three years later, in 1836, all regiments were ordered to adopt the plain white lace previously restricted to sergeants (and to all ranks of the Footguards).

The three figures in this plate all wear the kilt and a 'fly plaid', pinned behind the left shoulder and tucked in at the right hip, in imitation of the upper part of the old belted plaid. Indeed, even as late as 1900 this combination was officially referred to in uniform regulations as a 'belted plaid', although of course it was nothing of the sort. Unique to the 79th was the Cameron of Erracht tartan, which, unlike other military setts, was not based on the Government or Black Watch tartan and appears from a distance to be predominantly russet rather than dark blue. The fact that the regiment had such a very distinctive tartan, said to have been devised by the original colonel's mother, may well have been a contributory factor in Queen Victoria's adoption of the 79th as her 'Own' on 10 July 1873, resulting in the facings changing from the dark green seen here to the dark blue worn by all Royal regiments. Apart from their facing colour and tartans, Highland regiments could most readily be distinguished one from another at a distance by their purses or sporrans. At this period, the 79th had a white-over-dark-grey horse-hair front, with five bells or tassels; these were gold bullion for officers and red-over-white hair for the rank and file. By the 1850s the white patch had disappeared and for the rank and file the bells were reduced to two, albeit with long white horse-hair tails. However, officers, some senior NCOs and pipers continued to have five and later six tufted tassels for full dress. Another distinguishing feature was the diced hose or stockings. Initially all the Highland regiments wore the red/pink/white hose seen here, but in the 1840s the 79th adopted a red/green check instead, and shortly afterwards the 42nd and 92nd (and the pipers of the 72nd) opted for red/black.

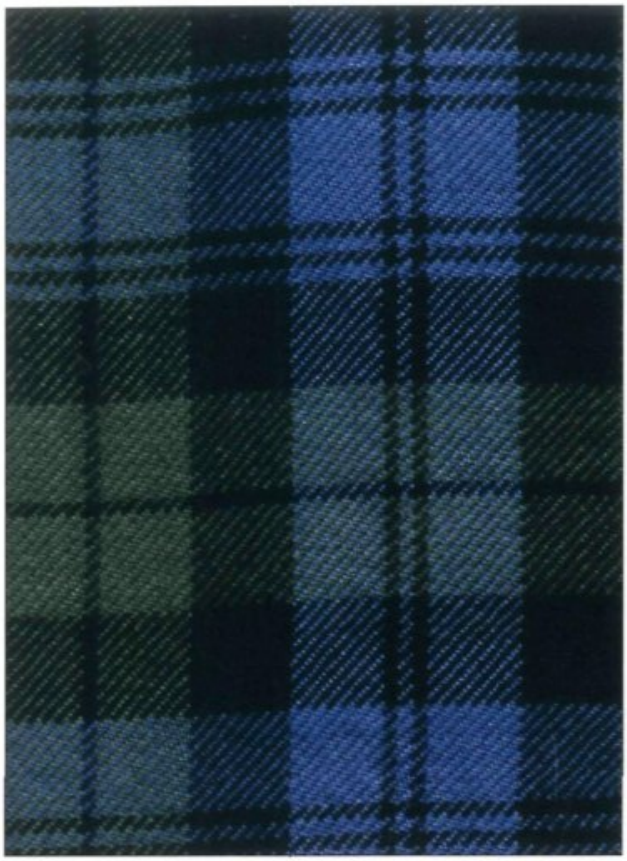
B: 74th HIGHLANDERS, 1840s

B1: Sergeant-major
B2: Private in full dress
B3: Private in walking-out dress

All three figures in this plate are based on a splendid painting by David Cunliffe, showing LtCol John Eyre Crabbe taking his leave of the regiment in May 1846, in which ten other officers and men are depicted in various orders of dress. The newly adopted uniform is in accordance with the Royal Warrant of 14 November 1845, which stated that it was to 'wear the tartan trews instead of the Oxford mixture; plaid cap instead of the black chaco; and the plaid scarf as worn by the Seventy-first Regiment'. Essentially, therefore, the uniform was the same as that then being worn by the 71st (Highland) Regiment (Light Infantry), with the obvious difference of white facings for the 74th rather than buff, and so-called Lamont tartan trews – actually the ordinary Government sett with a single white overstripe.

The shako as worn by officers and the sergeant-major was made of plain dark blue cloth with black cords and lines, gilt badges and gilt chain chinstrap, and a white-over-red ball tuft. For officers the double-breasted coatee had heavy gold epaulettes, gilt buttons and an abundance of gold lace which completely covered both the collar and the cuff flaps. As was customary, the sergeant-major **(B1)**, in 1846 a man named Robert Gibson, is to all intents and purposes wearing a commissioned officer's uniform. He is distinguished by the badges of rank on his sleeves, his unique wings, and by the use of silver rather than gold braid and appointments. His Highland status is emphasized not only by the Lamont tartan trews, broadsword and dirk, but also by a Highland scarf or 'shoulder plaid' looped under his right arm and crossed over his left shoulder.

The other senior NCOs also wore the double-breasted coatee, but in all other respects were dressed similarly to the rank and file **(B2)**, who had the standard short-tailed Highland coatee, now with plain white lace and thickly fringed wings. They did not wear the plaid, and again were chiefly distinguished from other regiments by their Lamont tartan trews and by their bonnets. Although blocked up into the shape of the contemporary shako, and with a crown now made of smooth dark blue cloth rather than of knitted and felted wool, the bonnet worn by the 71st and 74th Highlanders still



LEFT **The Government (42nd) sett. By 1936 – when tartans were finally regulated, rather than left to the individual regiments – the blue and green stripes were to be 2¼ in wide, separated by 1in-wide black stripes, but surviving examples from earlier periods often display much narrower stripes.**

RIGHT **The Mackenzie sett was essentially the Government sett with the addition of narrow white overstripes on the green stripes and narrow red overstripes on alternate blue stripes. In 1936 the blue and green stripes were to be 2in wide for the Seaforths and 2½in wide for the HLI, while the white overstripes were to be 5½in and 7in apart respectively, and the red overstripes 11in and 14in apart. It is unlikely that the differences were quite so precisely calculated in the 19th century.**

retained all the characteristic features of the original Kilmarnock, including the red tourie on the crown (albeit reduced to a flat button-like object) and the traditional diced band around the base.

Irrespective of their regimental facing colour, bandsmen wore white jackets and normally had the shoulder plaid or scarf as worn by B1. Pipers, however, were never considered as bandsmen and so for the most part still wore red regimental jackets at this period, although it was far from unknown for them to be dressed in outfits of their officers' own devising, which often featured tartan jackets. Like all trousered Highland regiments, the 74th paraded its pipers in full Highland dress which, according to the Cunliffe painting, meant a kilt in the regimental tartan, a shoulder plaid and a feathered bonnet, in this case with a dark blue hackle. The sporran worn by the 74th was brown with five white tassels in a row and a single one centred beneath, and at this time the hose were the traditional red/pink on white.

The practice of parading kilted pipers did not always meet with official approbation, and the Adjutant General addressed a stiff letter to the battalion on the subject in March 1849: 'With regard to the innovation introduced to the 74th Regiment of dressing the Pipers in the Kilt, the Commander in Chief orders its immediate discontinuance, and that Pipers may wear the dress of the Regiment'. Quite unintimidated, LtCol 'Jock' Fordyce briskly responded that 'This mode of dressing the Pipers is no innovation but that ever since the Regiment was raised they have been thus equipt'. Then, just by way of emphasizing the point, he added: 'I may mention that one of the Pipers now in the Regiment has worn the kilt for upwards of seventeen years and another for upwards of twelve years', before concluding with the ominous warning that 'The professional pride of the Pipers themselves (who are not easily procured) would be wounded by the change'. Not for the first time, the Army admitted defeat and no more was heard about the matter.

For fatigue dress and for walking out, tartan trousers – officially referred to as trews – were the rule in all the Highland regiments whether kilted or not, together with white shell jackets and Kilmarnock bonnets for NCOs and the rank and file. No facing colours were displayed on these jackets, and NCOs' chevrons were applied in red. A soldier wearing this order of dress duly appears in Cunliffe's painting **(B3)**, and a number of very similarly clad soldiers can also be seen in early photographs of the 92nd Highlanders at

Edinburgh Castle c.1846. Note the very substantial appearance of the Kilmarnock bonnet – this is the 'hummel' or plain version, but prior to the 1850s the 'mounted' bonnet was exactly the same underneath the feathers.

C: 72nd (DUKE OF ALBANY'S) HIGHLANDERS, 1850s

C1: Officer
C2: Private
C3: Pipe-major

In the aftermath of the king's visit to Scotland in 1822, romantic Jacobitism had become respectable, and as the first of the 'de-kilted' regiments to re-adopt a form of Highland dress the 72nd did so in considerable style. Their entirely new tartan, based on a sett said to have been worn by Prince Charles Edward Stuart in 1745, is often confused with the Royal Stuart tartan, which was later derived from it (and latterly adopted by the pipers of the Black Watch). It is actually a quite different sett in which the green and red stripes are the same size, so that the former are much more prominent than in the more familiar Royal Stuart sett.

In January 1855 a plain double-breasted tunic was introduced to replace the long-outmoded coatee for regiments of the Line, but Highland regiments received a strikingly different 'doublet' of entirely original design, with so-called 'Inverness flaps' and diamond-shaped buttons. Officers' doublets, here **(C1)** based on a contemporary portrait, followed the same pattern, the old heavy bullion epaulettes now being replaced with a plaited gold cord shoulder knot.

The private **(C2)** is taken from a contemporary photograph album of Crimean Heroes. Other than the new doublet, the most obvious changes lie in the replacement of the old cross-belt and breastplate for the bayonet with a white buff leather waist belt ('buff' here referring to the traditional term for this heavy hide, rather than the colour), fastened with a locket and supporting both the bayonet and a black leather 'expense pouch' for his second model Pattern 1853 Enfield rifle.

An even greater alteration took place in the uniforms of pipers. Here **(C3)** is based on another post-Crimean photograph, of Pipe-major John MacDonald, a noted player who won the first prize in the Highland Gathering at Chobham Camp in July 1853, where, as Lt Stewart gloated: 'the 72nd rather distinguished themselves in carrying off all the best prizes and beating the swell Kilty regts. to nothing'. Since the only officially authorized pipers prior to January 1854 were the two carried on the strength of the grenadier company in place of the fifers of other Line units, there were no clothing regulations specifically relating to pipers until the introduction of the new uniforms in January 1855. The Glengarry was then to be adopted as the piper's headdress for all occasions, although the pipers of the 42nd (Black Watch) retained the feather bonnet with its distinctive red hackle. Rather more strikingly, regimental pipers were to wear the new doublet in what is now called 'piper-green' rather than red. The reason for this alteration in colour is not entirely clear, but it was almost certainly inspired by the precedent of the 79th's pipers, who had been wearing green for some time; this was part of an unsuccessful campaign by LtCol the Hon Lauderdale Maule to have his regiment redesignated as Highland Rifles.

The Portsmouth artist David Cunliffe made several important paintings in 1853/54 which, among other points of great interest, bear out the licence then enjoyed by regiments in their pipers' dress. His study 'The Sword Dance', showing a group from the 93rd at Chobham Camp, has puzzled many, since the piper wears elements of 42nd, 92nd and 93rd uniform. We now know that Capt J.A.Ewart of the 93rd, who arranged the opportunity for the artist, gathered items of dress from officers and men of more than one regiment and had them modelled by the most soldierly-looking men available. Cunliffe also made an intriguing portrait of Pipe-Major James Wilson of the 93rd, wearing an odd-looking red doublet and sporting a pipe-banner featuring the Union flag. Incidentally, both this portrait and Cunliffe's magnificent group painting of the 79th – now in New Zealand – show strikingly large and elaborate red garters on the hose. (An important discussion of Cunliffe's military works was published by R.G.Harris in *Military Illustrated Past & Present*, Nos.32 & 33, January & February 1991.)

D: 92nd (GORDON) HIGHLANDERS, 1860s

D1: Major Forbes McBean
D2: Piper
D3: Colour-sergeant

All three figures in this plate are based on an informal group photograph showing Maj Forbes McBean and the permanent staff of the regiment's depot standing rather casually outside Stirling Castle one day in 1861. The double-breasted doublet had quickly proved unpopular, and in 1856 was ordered to be replaced with a single-breasted design with effect from 1 April 1857, but otherwise there were few changes. Major McBean **(D1)** is to all intents and purposes wearing full dress with the exception of the forage cap. His status as a field officer is reflected in the heavy gold lace on the 1856 pattern doublet, incoporating the black line peculiar to this regiment. The tartans worn by officers and some senior NCOs, now known as 'staff tartans', were of a superior material to those worn by the rank and file and generally rather lighter in tone, which means that the sett can be distinguished far more clearly. In this case the Gordon tartan is simply the Government sett with a single yellow over-stripe. The white-haired dress sporran seen here contrasts with the black-haired sporrans worn by the NCOs and rank and file. In undress the five gold bullion tassels were initially replaced with five black ones, but after 1881 the undress sporran had two long black tails.

The piper **(D2)**, largely based on a man identified as Piper Mitchell, shows how individualistically regiments interpreted uniform regulations. Instead of the Glengarry he wears a flat blue bonnet, of a style which appears to have been popular at the time for wear off-duty, with the two blackcock feathers which became the badge of the piper in place of the single eagle feather originally proposed. Similarly, he wears an officers'-pattern undress sporran, and a soldier's red doublet instead of the regulation one in plain dark green. By this time the piper's sword belt was becoming ever more elaborately decorated, but at the same time it was also becoming increasingly rare for the sword itself to be worn. It was officially abandoned in 1872, and thereafter, although the sword belt continued (and indeed still continues) to be worn, the dirk was the only weapon carried by pipers on parade.

The colour-sergeant **(D3)** is a composite of C/Sgts Stuart and Maitland. He wears the 1856 pattern doublet, a kilt in the Gordon tartan, and the red/black hose adopted by the

regiment in the 1850s. The black sporran with small white tassels was replaced after 1881 by a white one with two black tails. His full marching order is similar to that worn by C2, but with the addition of a white buff percussion cap pouch on the cartridge box sling, and the substitution of the Pattern 1859 ten-round ball bag or expense pouch in buff leather for the earlier 20-round black leather version. As a senior NCO, he also wears a red worsted sash; from 1856 these were to be worn over the right shoulder as depicted here, except when the sword belt was worn. Instead of a sword, he is armed with the Pattern 1856 Short rifle, with the yataghan bayonet issued to most sergeants of the Line.

E: 91st (ARGYLL) AND 93rd (SUTHERLAND) HIGHLANDERS, 1870s

E1: Quartermaster, 91st
E2: Sergeant, 93rd
E3: Pioneer corporal, 93rd

In 1864 the 91st (Argyllshire) Regiment adopted the same uniform as the 71st and 74th, distinguished only by its cap badge, facings and tartan, which in this case was the Campbell of Cawdor sett – the standard Government sett, with the addition of a red and a light blue overstripe. In 1868 a third pattern of doublet was introduced for all Highland regiments, very similar to the previous one but replacing the old slash cuffs with the gauntlet style first worn only by some pipers. As a regimental staff officer the quartermaster **(E1)**, who was invariably a former NCO, did not wear the white buff shoulder belt but instead suspended his sword from a black leather waist-belt worn under the doublet; the gold braided belt worn on top of the doublet supports the dirk.

The sergeant of the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders **(E2)** is in drill order, distinguished from fatigue or undress by his wearing a kilt, hose and spats with his white jacket, rather than the less formal trews. This form of dress was worn for a variety of duties. As a sergeant he has the gold lace badges of rank prescribed in 1868, although corporals and lance-corporals continued to wear red chevrons with this jacket. His kilt is of so-called Sutherland tartan, often described as a lighter version of the Black Watch tartan; in fact the reverse is true, in that the Black Watch seem to have tried to live up to their name by adopting a darker version of the Government sett while the 93rd retained the original colouring. Although this tartan was 'undifferenced' by the addition of the coloured overstripes adopted by most other Highland units, there were nevertheless a number of regimental distinctions beyond the yellow facings displayed on the doublet. On the kilt, officers and senior NCOs had the ribbons and elaborately embroidered panel shown here. Officers and NCOs also had badger masks on their sporrans; and the 93rd was one of only two regiments to retain the old red/pink check on white for its hose. The most distinctive feature of all was the Sutherland dicing on their bonnets and Glengarrys – a true red-and-white chequer.

The pioneer corporal **(E3)**, distinguished by his sleeve badge, is based on photographs providing front, side and rear views. He is parading in full marching order, with the Pattern 1871 Valise equipment minus the ammunition pouches. Instead he carries a variety of tools: the shovel and pickaxe and – hidden here by the sheathed billhook – the saw-backed pioneer sword, with knucklebow guard, worn on the left hip in place of the bayonet. The doublet is the 1868 pattern, which from 1872 was made from scarlet cloth for other ranks as well as for NCOs. From 1874 it also sported a regimental badge on the collar, which for the 93rd was an Imperial crown in brass. After the 91st and 93rd amalgamated to form the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in 1881, a unique double collar (and cap) badge was adopted, placing the boar's-head crest of the Campbells alongside the cat of the Sutherland family (see page 37).

F: BLACK WATCH (ROYAL HIGHLANDERS), 1880s

F1: Captain
F2: Piper in drill order
F3: Regimental policeman

The captain **(F1)** wears what was in effect the final version of the full dress uniform prior to World War I, and is immediately marked as a member of the Black Watch by the red vulture-feather hackle in his bonnet, which also has just four very large 'fox tail' ostrich plumes on the right. The regiment's Royal status is indicated not only by the dark blue facings on the doublet, but also, rather less obviously, by the use of blue squares at the intersection of the vertical and horizontal lines on the diced band at the base of his bonnet, rather than the green squares used by most other regiments. Note the use of the 'fly plaid'. Rank is indicated by the design of the cuff lace and by two silver badges – invisible here – on the gold shoulder cord. The sporran had gold bullion tassels only in Review Order, and otherwise the black tassels illustrated. The sword is still the 1828 pattern, but the dirk is 'regimental' – as are the large green ribbons attached to the right side of the kilt apron for officers and senior NCOs.

In the early days the pipers of the 42nd wore a red 'musick' tartan, frequently but inaccurately described in secondary sources as Royal Stuart. In fact, according to the 1819 pattern books kept by the tartan weavers – William Wilson of Bannockburn – this particular 'musick' sett was simply the ordinary regimental tartan as worn by sergeants, but with the black lines replaced by red ones. This practice was discontinued in about 1840, and for some time thereafter pipers wore the ordinary regimental tartan. In the 1870s, however, they also adopted a true Royal Stuart shoulder plaid or scarf, and this striking combination of white drill jacket, dark kilt and red plaid **(F2)** is based on an 1879 painting by Edouard Detaille. Eventually, in May 1890, the Royal Stuart tartan was also adopted for pipers' kilts. As he is in drill order the piper wears an ordinary undress Glengarry, which for the 42nd/Black Watch was plain blue without a diced band or a cockade behind the cap badge. In full dress, the Black Watch pipers uniquely continued to wear the feather bonnet, probably in order to show off the regiment's red hackle.

Most 'crime' in Highland regiments was drink-related and required a strong provost or regimental police detachment to maintain order. Spencer Ewart of the 79th recorded in his diary how, on being ordered home from Gibraltar in July 1882, the whole battalion got gloriously drunk and 'Colour Sergeant Grimmond was reduced and Private Donald Cameron of my company was in Orderly Room for being drunk and declining to leave off singing the "Cameron Men"'.

The regimental policeman **(F3)** is based on a group photograph of the Black Watch 'Provost Staff', all wearing

the doublet and trews with the plain blue regimental Glengarry; note the brassard on the right cuff with the letters 'MP' for military police, rather than the more common 'RP' for regimental police.

G: SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS, 1890s

G1: Private
G2: Drummer
G3: Tailor

Concurrently with the regimental amalgamations in 1881, an attempt was made to standardize facing colours in order to avoid arguments over which facings should be adopted by the new units. Royal regiments retained their dark blue facings; but otherwise all English regiments were to have white facings, all Irish regiments green, and all Scottish regiments yellow. In practice this made very little difference to the majority of Scots units. The Royal Scots, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the Black Watch and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders retained their blue facings, while both battalions of the 75th/92nd Gordons were already in yellow, as were the 91st/93rd Argylls. Only three of the merged regiments changed: the Cameronians adopted a completely new uniform in rifle-green; and the Highland Light Infantry were compelled to adopt a 'neutral' yellow instead of the original buff and white facings of the 71st and 74th respectively. The Seaforths were a slightly different case, in that yellow was the facing colour of the old 72nd, and initially it was put about that the new uniform combined the 72nd facing colour with the 78th kilt. Over the course of time, however, opinion within the regiment shifted, and in 1899 it asked for and was permitted to wear the almost creamy white-buff facings of the old 78th.

The rather casual-looking soldier on the left **(G1)** wears the 1873 pattern serge frock, opened to illustrate how high the kilt was actually worn at this period. Having given up their facing-coloured jackets in 1836, drummers **(G2)** were distinguished by the wearing of lace and fringed wings; note also the facing-colour cuffs. In most Highland regiments they wore the same white hackle as the rank and file, but the drummers of the 72nd had worn a red hackle and this tradition was maintained by the Seaforths. Drummers did not normally wear sporrans, unless parading as orderly buglers, which offers a useful opportunity to illustrate more clearly the Mackenzie tartan as worn by the 78th/Seaforths, now known to the Army as Mackenzie No.2. This is readily identified by the single red overstripe placed vertically at the centre of the apron.

All units at this period included a detachment of tailors, who worked part-time for the quartermaster in fitting uniforms and carrying out repairs and alterations. In Highland regiments the tailors also needed to be time-served kilt-makers, as these garments were made up by the regiments themselves. The 1881 amalgamations therefore necessitated the transfer of a cadre of men from the kilted to the formerly non-kilted battalions, not only to instruct them in the arcane mysteries of wearing Highland dress, but also to train up the kilt-makers. Based on a group photograph, **(G3)** wears a pair of the trews normally used as a working dress, and, like all the tailors in the detachment, an unofficial 'regimental' waistcoat fronted with the same Mackenzie tartan used for the kilts.

H: HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY, 1900s

H1: Sergeant bugler
H2: Pipe sergeant
H3: Private

Notwithstanding the loss of the kilt in 1809, the 71st and 74th had continued to assert their Highland identity through the wearing of tartan trews and other items of 'Highland' dress and appointments. However, in the consolidation of regimental uniforms which accompanied the Childers amalgamations of 1881, all Scottish infantry units were to wear doublets and tartan, the Highland regiments being kilted while the Lowland regiments – including the newly

Crimson silk net sash, this example worn by an officer of the 78th/Seaforth Highlanders.

(A) The kilt 'apron' seen from the front – in this case of the Mackenzie tartan worn by pipers of the 71st/Highland Light Infantry, and later by all ranks of the regiment between 1947 and its enforced amalgamation with the Royal Scots Fusiliers in January 1958. One of the Territorial battalions, the 6th (City of Glasgow), also wore this kilt. It is easily distinguished from the same Mackenzie tartan worn by the 78th/Seaforths by its two vertical red overstripes on the front apron; Seaforth kilts display a single vertical red stripe down the centre. The comparatively small size of the checks suggests that this may have been an officer's 'mufti' or informal kilt.

(B) Rear view of the kilt, showing the strikingly different appearance of the pleated section.

(C) Right side of the kilt, as worn by the turn of the 19th/20th century. The primary means of securing the kilt is by the pair of buckled straps, which replaced the earlier straight pin fixing, although the latter was retained by the Black Watch as late as 1914.

(D) Left side of the kilt; the single buckle is used to secure the inner front apron, the strap passing through a slit made for the purpose in the outer apron. Note the high waistline of the kilt, approximating with the lower ribs.

A

B

C

D

formed Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) – were to have trews. With its depot now at Hamilton in Lanarkshire, and its uniform no longer to be different from that worn by Lowland corps, the HLI were fiercely protective of their Highland status.

As a very senior NCO, **(H1)**, based on a photograph of Sergeant Bugler Mauchan of 2HLI, wears a uniform largely patterned after that of a commissioned officer, with the obvious exception of the Highland feathered bonnet and red hackle unique to his post. Notwithstanding the bonnet, he also wears an officer's black cap lines around his neck and down by the right hip. In April 1880 the 71st had been challenged to provide the authority for wearing them, but the then colonel airily replied that as far as was known in the regiment they had been wearing them ever since becoming light infantry, and were certainly doing so when he joined the regiment in 1830. Faced by such a bold (if unlikely) assertion, officialdom granted authorization by return. The shoulder plaid is worn in a straightforward manner, and it is interesting to note the difference in quality between the tartans used for the plaid and trews respectively.

After some adroit lobbying by former 71st officers, the yellow facings imposed in 1881 were changed to that battalion's old buff in 1900; and as the 74th had already reluctantly adopted the Mackenzie tartan trews of the 71st in place of its Lamont

Tinted photograph of Black Watch dressed for service in South Africa, c.1900, in khaki-covered foreign service helmets, khaki drill frocks, whitened buff leather equipment, and home service uniform from the waist down. Note the different five-tailed sporran worn by the piper; and the base drummer's leopardskin apron, its dark edging cut in 'vandyke' points. The kilt worn by the private on the left seems excessively long, and the young bugler at right almost disappears behind his sporran.

ones, this in effect meant that the HLI was wearing the uniform of the old 71st. Consequently, the thoroughly disgruntled 2HLI (ex-74th) strove to retain as many of the remaining distinctive features as possible, and it was not until 1906 that a committee of officers drawn from both battalions agreed on how the two uniforms should be harmonized. The arrangement of the officers' and NCOs' sashes was one of the causes for contention: in 1HLI the sash was worn over the sword belt, while 2HLI wore it underneath – as shown here. In 1906 it was agreed that it should henceforth be worn over the belt by both battalions. Conversely, despite the fact that the 1900 Dress Regulations unambiguously decreed that the Claymore was to have a removable basket hilt for levees, etc, and 'on other occasions a cross-bar hilt', the cross-hilt was only ever worn by the 1st Bn's officers. The officers of 2HLI insisted on parading with a basket hilt on their 1828 pattern broadswords until 1906, when the basket hilt was adopted by officers of both battalions.

The way in which the Mackenzie tartan was cut to distinguish between the kilts of the Seaforths and of the HLI pipers was duplicated in the tailoring of the trews and pantaloons. As worn by the HLI, a white overstripe line ran vertically down the front of each leg, with a red line at the side – in contrast with the Seaforths, who ran a red line down the centre just as they did on their kilts.

On parade the swagger stick seen here was replaced by the customary mace; this had a black ebony staff with silver cords and a silver head topped with an elephant, commemorating the 74th's part in the battle of Assaye in 1803.

The 'Pipey' **(H2)**, based on another photograph, wears the usual green doublet, and the dark green Glengarry prescribed for this regiment. In undress a white jacket was worn, piped green. Once again, as a member of the 2nd Bn he wears his sash under the sword belt. Of most interest is the kilt, which at this time was officially supposed to be worn only by the pipers of the regular battalions (and all ranks of what became 6HLI). Note the difference in the arrangement of the Mackenzie tartan on the apron from that worn by the Seaforths (G2), with two vertical red lines; and also the three tails on his sporran. His hose are knitted in the Mackenzie tartan.

The private **(H3)**, in guard order, is based on a painting by Caton Woodville and photographs of 8907 Pte Jack Milton. He wears the last version of full dress as seen up until 1914. The cap is still the 1862 pattern shako – at this stage with a black ball tuft at front, although this was changed to green in 1905. Milton fairly typified the new breed of Highlander: while Pte Ritchie (A1) had been an illiterate labourer, enlisted for unlimited service, the 18-year-old Milton signed up for a Short Service Engagement on 20 August 1903, and was discharged to the Army Reserve just three years later on 16 August 1906. He was recalled to 2HLI on 5 August 1914, subsequently being wounded twice, and finally discharged on 1 December 1916.

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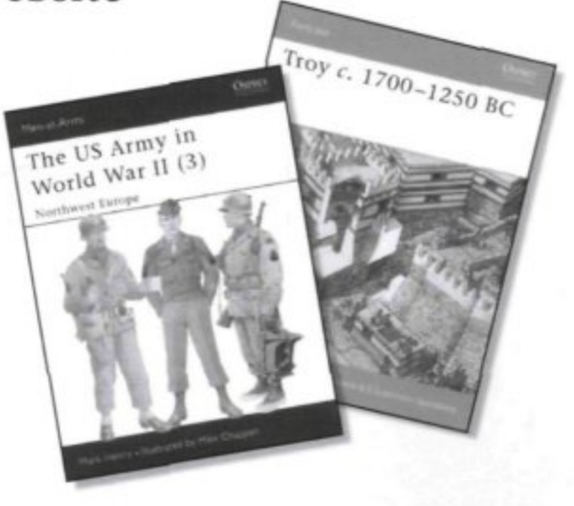

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